

**Exploring Professional Development Experiences
of the Professionally Unqualified
Practicing Teachers in Rural
Secondary Schools**

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DECLARATION

The work presented in this thesis unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is my own and has not been presented for any degree work in another university.

Where use has been made of the work of others it is duly acknowledged in the text.

The University of KwaZulu-Natal certified ethical clearance for this study.

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Prof Volker Ralf Wedekind
Supervisor

Abstract

Attempts to address global pressure to achieve Education For All (EFA) have been hampered by two fundamental challenges in developing countries, namely an acute shortage of teachers and the large rural populations in these countries. In addition there is a trend for qualified competent teachers to shun working in rural settings. While recruitment of professionally unqualified graduate teachers into the teaching profession has become internationally accepted, to address particularly rural school postings and EFA commitments, there remain outstanding questions regarding how such teachers grow and develop in those rural contexts. An understanding of how these teachers develop professionally is crucial.

The study explored professional development experiences of professionally unqualified practicing teachers in rural secondary schools. Through a double site study involving two international sites, Zimbabwe and KwaZulu–Natal, South Africa, an interpretive/qualitative design was adopted. Three-interview series supported by document reviews and photo elicitations were employed to explore these teachers' experiences. Data was transcribed and manually analysed inductively utilizing open coding.

The findings suggest that professional development for these teachers occurs in a number of sites, namely: through the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) / Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) programme; in the school through practice and school meetings; in the wider professional sites; and in informal communities. Drawing on Cultural Historical Activity Theory to describe, analyse and understand data, I argue that the professionally unqualified practicing teachers experience professional development through interaction in multiple domains of formality and experience: formal, non formal, informal and experiential. Professional development occurs across these domains however, findings show that these teachers feel incapacitated by lack of support. This implies a need for more supervisory and resource support.

The teachers conceive their professional development experiences in rural secondary school contexts as underpinned by having to ‘make-do’, relational dimensions, interdependence and agency as well as resourcefulness, creativity and improvisation to address gross resource limitations. The thesis suggests a need for further research into enhancing professional development practices of the professionally unqualified practicing teachers in rural school settings. Professional development can be supported. Given that teachers are teaching in under resourced and geographically rural contexts where they have ‘to make-do’, this has a bearing on the achievement of EFA goals within the wider context.

In relation to the Cultural Historical Activity Theory, my argument is that the framework provides a useful generic, analytical tool for thinking through how professional development occurs in multi-domains. However, on its own it does not provide a complete lens to make sense of the variations in professional development within the domains and levels of formality and experience. The thesis therefore argues for an additive model to CHAT, which includes domain-based distinctions of formality and experience that may expand the framework and deepen its applicability specifically, in trying to understand professional development issues. The thesis therefore suggests the need for more studies, drawing on the framework and developing it to determine its applicability beyond this particular inquiry.

DEDICATION

To my dear late husband Antony Dennis Mukeredzi, and my late parents, Ethrida Bvunzwi and Lazarus Chiyangwa Chatikobo, I know you all would have been very proud. From you I shall continue to draw inspiration.

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Abbreviations

A'Level'	Advanced Level Certificate
BEdS	Bachelor of Education Secondary
CHAT	Cultural Historical Activity Theory
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPTD	Continuing Professional Teacher Development
Dip Ed	Diploma in Education
DoE	Department of Education
EC	Ethical Clearance
EFA	Education for All
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FETC	Further Education Teaching Certificate
HDE	Higher Diploma in Education
HED	Higher Education Diploma
HED	Higher Education Diploma
HoD	Head of Department
HSRC	Humans Science Research Council
ICT	Information communication Technology
INSET	In-Service Education and Training
IPET	Initial Professional Education and Training
MEd	Master of Education
MoE	Ministry of Education
MOESC	Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture
MOHTE	Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers' Organization of South Africa
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NQF	National Qualifications Framework with the
O' Level	Ordinary Level Certificate
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PED	Provincial Education Director
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
PGDE	Post Graduate Diploma in Education
Pmb	Pietermaritzburg
PTUZ	Progressive Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe
PUPT	Professionally Unqualified Practicing Teacher
RCZ	Reformed Church in Zimbabwe
RDC	Rural District Councils
SA	South Africa
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SADTU	South Africa Democratic Teachers' Union
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SASA	South African Schools Act

SLM	School Liaison Mentor
SMT	School Management Team
TA	Traditional Authority
TEPD	Teacher Education and Professional Development programmes
TP	Teaching Practice
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UED	University Education Diploma
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WEF	World Economic Forum
ZAP	Zone of Actual Performance
ZCC	Zion Christian Church
Zim	Zimbabwe
ZIMTA	Zimbabwe Teachers' Association
ZINTEC	Zimbabwe Integrated National Teacher Education Course
ZOU	Zimbabwe Open University
ZPD	Zone of proximal development

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Chapter 1

Setting the Scene

Background to the Study

Governments have lately been experiencing a lot of global pressure from the world context around achieving Education For All (EFA). Throughout the world countries have made commitments to every child, indeed, to every person having access to basic education. The World Conference on Education for All declared, "... every person – child, youth and adult shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs" (UNESCO 2004:7). The declaration was responding to international concern about the deterioration of education systems. The concern was against a background that the formal education system for basic education of children outside the family was a vital developmental component for nations and their citizens. With regard to EFA, the World Bank report points out:

... Education – especially basic (primary and lower secondary) helps to reduce poverty by increasing the productivity of the poor, and improving health, and by equipping people with the skills they need to participate fully in the economy and in society (World Bank, 1995:21).

Basic learning needs in this context encompass essential learning tools (literacy, oral expression, numeracy, problem solving) and learning content (knowledge, skills, values, attitudes) critical for survival and development of full capacities for dignified life and work, full participation in development to enhance life quality and make informed decisions and, engage in life-long learning (Taylor & Mulhall, 2006).

Attempts to meet the commitment for the enunciated EFA for all have been confronted by two significant challenges particularly in developing countries. To begin with, there is an acute shortage of adequately trained teachers internationally (Lewin, Samuel et al., 2003 ; UNESCO, 2004; USAID, 2006). The UNESCO (2004) research notes "rights of children within education continue to be compromised by untrained and poorly trained teachers"

(2004:138). Lewin, Samuel et al. hypothesize that “many education systems cannot produce enough new teachers to meet projected demand and EFA development targets without expanding output by up to four-fold (2003:133). To confirm the World Economic Forum SA (WEF) says:

It will be an expensive business to meet the cost of getting 14 million more children into school, provide effective literacy training for up to 65 million young people and adults, train 750 000 more teachers, provide books and materials and make up for the infrastructure deficit (World Economic Forum SA, 2009:1).

Then there is the issue of many developing countries having large populations that are located in rural areas. In Zimbabwe 80% of Black Zimbabweans live in rural areas (Chikoko, 2006) and consequently most schools are located in these rural settings. Globally, between 60 –70% of all school age children are enrolled in rural schools (HSRC SA, 2005; Mulkeen, 2006; UNESCO, 2004). There is a trend that qualified, competent teachers shun working in rural areas for diverse reasons. UNESCO (2004) confirms that one major challenge has to do with deployment issues - getting teachers to rural schools.

... Problems associated with personnel postings may be at their worst in schools located in rural areas. Administrators report continued difficulty recruiting personnel for rural positions ... teachers shun rural schools because of geographical isolation, socio-economic conditions and cultural differences (2004:62).

Given these global problems, an attempt to develop a little more understanding of these big issues is worthwhile. This is what this study aims to contribute in a limited way. Through personal experience of teaching and coordinating the Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) in the Zimbabwean context, two very interesting issues emerged. First, all new teachers have to spend time in rural school settings. Second, the system is able to recruit graduates into the teaching field who are not necessarily professionally qualified as teachers. This again is in line with international trends where graduates are being persuaded to go into teaching and given special dispensations to develop them to qualified status.

Current debate in Southern Africa and beyond has revolved around issues of producing university graduates versus expansion of teachers’ colleges at under graduate and diploma

level. Internationally, countries such as Malawi, Kenya and Cuba have reduced the duration of teacher training programmes to meet EFA initiatives and rapidly increase the size of the teaching force (Lewin, Samuel et al., 2003). This, however, can be contrasted to the quality of the graduate generated through the reduced training period given that one of the issues of concern about reduction of training duration is that teachers produced may have limited depth of disciplinary knowledge. Consequently, a counter argument is that the graduate teacher is preferable.

The particular sample group explored in this study are people who are graduates, not professionally qualified, but teaching in rural contexts. Looking at them enables an exploration of issues that intersect with the bigger debates. These include whether it is a good idea to have graduates in these schools, and putting them into classrooms before they are trained. Further, can those graduates, particularly in rural contexts, be retained? Also, can they get sufficient support and professional development to become competent teachers? This interaction therefore lifts the specifics of the twelve teachers that form the heart of this study into the wider debate on teacher supply and demand, recruitment and retention, and EFA. Thus, in this study, it is not, only about understanding the twelve teachers. While these teachers are not fully representative due to small sample size, they exemplify teachers teaching in rural contexts in two developing countries, and may shed light on issues that are pertinent to the wider context.

Given the interest in social equity and social justice in the world as a whole, an understanding of what attracts, retains and helps those teachers to grow and develop in those contexts will assist in ultimately developing better policies and providing better programmes. This thesis is not necessarily addressing all those high level questions. It does, however, address a specific research question that is contributing to a wider discussion around what can be done to ensure quality teachers for poor contexts - and in this particular situation and context, rural communities in Southern Africa specifically in SA and Zimbabwe.

In the context of this study, the teachers are professionally unqualified, yet already practicing teachers possess disciplinary content acquired at degree level and are experienced, but they do not possess the professional teaching qualification. As a result

they are professionally unqualified. The study explores experiences of this category of teachers. One key dimension of quality education in rural areas is teacher quality as the quality of the teacher impacts on teaching/learning and consequently on learner achievement (Trust, 2007). Teacher qualification is generally believed to imply quality of the teacher. Teacher quality encompasses a broad range of skills, competencies and motivations and, teacher training enables development of these attributes to ensure quality service from the teacher (Trust, 2007). As quality education is generally believed to produce good learning outcomes, teacher education is therefore expected to contribute to this objective. Thus, teacher quality has become a key focus of the United Nations efforts to provide quality education in rural areas (Murerwa, 2004). Given that the phenomenon of quality education in rural areas has become an international concern, it therefore became imperative to focus local efforts in this direction. Therefore, this study sought to explore professional development experiences of the professionally unqualified practicing teachers in rural secondary schools.

Focus and Purpose of Study

The question of how teachers engage in professional development practices at rural school level has apparently remained inadequately answered. In addition, the support received, the needs and conceptions of professional development experiences in these rural schools remained unknown and needed to be explored. Such knowledge was deemed essential for reviewing the professional development efforts undertaken by institutions which reviews were apparently necessary if the quality of teacher education provision was to be enhanced. The study therefore emerged against the backdrop of an apparent absence of such knowledge.

Some of the practicing unqualified teachers are currently enrolled in Initial Teacher Education Programmes such as the Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) offered by the Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) and Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) offered by the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) in order to become qualified. One may want to view these unqualified practicing teachers as pre-service or initial students in so far as they are not qualified, but as in-service or continuing students

by virtue of their being university graduates, experienced and serving as teachers. In the context of this study, the term ‘unqualified practicing teacher’ has been used interchangeably with ‘student teacher’ by virtue of their enrolment status on Teacher Education and Professional Development programmes (TEPD). It is the experiences of students enrolled on initial postgraduate TEPD programmes that are the focus of this study.

The purpose of this study was to understand the practices that these professionally unqualified practicing teachers (PUPTs) were going through in experiencing rural school-based professional development. Professional development at school level in this context was viewed as taking four dimensions: formal, which was university supported and contributing towards attainment of the qualification; experiential which was through classroom practice; non-formal, which may have been planned, organized and structured either internally or externally to the school but, without direct contribution to their qualification; and informal, that being incidental professional development which they would pick up from, for example, collegial interactions. This study set out to understand all four dimensions of their experiences of professional development. Data gathering therefore attempted to extract information indicating whether or not, and to what extent, some or all of these dimensions benefited professional development of these PUPTs.

Key Research Question

In pursuit of the issues raised above, this study sought to understand the experiences of professional development of PUPTs in rural secondary schools. To enable deep exploration and achievement of this objective, the study attempted to answer the following key question:

How do the PUPTs engage in professional development practices in rural secondary schools?

To unpack this question a number of subsidiary questions needed to be addressed:

- What is the nature of professional development practices that the PUPTs engage in rural secondary schools?

- What are the professional development needs of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools?
- How does support by colleagues and the university enhance professional development practices of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools?
- What are the conceptions of the PUPTs of their professional development experiences at rural secondary school level?
- How do the differing contexts at school, system and national levels affect the professional development experiences?

Personal Context and Motivation for The Study

To provide a sound understanding of how I locate myself in this study, this section discusses my personal context and motivation. I also include a discussion on my axiological assumptions. In order to broaden my perception of the research and its illumination, it became important to position myself within the problem situation and explain how I became attracted to and fascinated by it. I believe that a PhD study hinges on one's 'internal story' (Bhengu, 2005), a personal expedition closely intertwined with external stories of other players. This is the situation given the research framework I adopted for my study: namely an interpretive/qualitative approach involving document reviews, photo elicitation and interviews in schools where interaction with participants was central to data elicitation and interpretation.

When I undertook this study, I was employed full-time by the ZOU where I was appointed and worked as coordinator of the PGDE Programme since its inception in August 2000, and on the Bachelor of Education Secondary (BEdS) and Diploma in Education (Dip Ed) from their inauguration in 2005. I had, inter alia, taught *Guide to School Experiences* and *Curriculum* modules in these programmes. The teacher education programmes, PGDE and Dip. Ed were wholly school-based, under the day-to-day tutorship of a mentor. My work in these programmes also entailed teaching practice co-ordination and supervision. All this put me in close and frequent contact with what happens in classroom practice and more so in school-based TEPD.

Further, as part of my community service, I was working as a part-time lecturer at Masvingo Polytechnic in the Teacher Education Department where I was teaching school experiences among others as well as supervising teaching practice at certificate and diploma levels to their trainee lecturers. All this kept me in touch with the classroom and TEPD.

My own career in education began when I left Gwelo Teacher's College (now Gweru Teacher's College) after completing a Secondary Teacher's Diploma. I got a place to teach in a private inner city secondary school. After teaching for about ten years, often having to deal with student teachers on school experience, I was appointed education officer for one of the largest regions in the country in charge of standards control in the teaching/learning of technical subjects. My job entailed supervision of teachers and schools to ensure maintenance of appropriate academic and professional development standards. After three years, I transferred laterally to join a polytechnic where I was going to spearhead the opening of the Division of Applied Arts and Sciences. Teacher Education was the inaugural department in this division with the launch of the Further Education Teaching Certificate (FETC) programme. The programme offered pedagogical skills to lecturers from poly-technical colleges nationally. Part of my work involved coordination, organization and conducting teaching practice supervision and professional development. After nine years in the college, I joined the ZOU as lecturer and programme coordinator for PGDE. All this not only kept me in close contact with classroom practice, but also developed in me a passion for TEPD. Given my involvement in the PGDE programme as discussed above, I came into this study with some axiological assumptions that are discussed in the following section.

Axiological Assumptions

Axiological assumptions address the role of values of both the researcher and the researched in a study. Answering the question, acknowledges that research is value-laden and that there are some biases (Cresswell, 1998). Thus the researcher admits the value-laden nature of data gathered from the field and also reports her own values and biases (Cresswell, 2003; Cresswell, 1998). The researcher therefore openly acknowledges and

discusses values that shape the narrative. As the major data gathering instrument my presence would be apparent through the interpretation and presentation of data. My epistemological role had some implications for the axiological assumptions in this study.

My perceptions of professional development for these PUPTs were shaped by personal experiences in the ZOU where I coordinated the PGDE Programme. The particular cohort of teachers explored were part of the population of students doing PGDE before I left to read for a PhD. Apart from teaching, I was involved in the organization, management and supervision of the delivery of all their programme modules inclusive of school-based teaching practice in rural secondary school settings. This contextual and role understanding enhanced my awareness, knowledge and sensitivity to challenges, experiences and issues encountered by these PUPTs and, assisted me in working with them in this study.

I brought knowledge of both the structure of the programme and the experiences of the PUPTs in rural settings. I need to state clearly upfront that in this study I paid particular attention to the teachers' professional development experiences in their different rural school contexts. Due to my previous experiences working closely with other PUPTs, I brought certain biases to this study. Notwithstanding all efforts to ensure objectivity, such biases might have shaped my views and understanding of the data I generated and the manner in which I interpreted my experiences. I commenced the study with the perspective that the PUPTs go through complex, multiple and diverse professional development experiences. This was apparently a significant expectation that was taken for granted, but I interrogated how they engaged in professional development experiences, the nature of support they obtained from colleagues and the university that enhanced their professional development practices, their professional development needs and their conceptions of professional development experiences. Given this, values of participants were explored and analysed through their education histories to determine how those experiences influenced their current position, current practices and reflections as teachers. Having declared my axiological assumptions upfront, the next section presents the rationale for the study.

Rationale for The Study

The rationale for this study is underpinned and driven by three considerations related to policy, personal, programme, academic and theoretical issues.

First, as indicated earlier on, rural schools globally serve large populations (Security Council, 2008; Mulkeen, 2006; UNESCO, 2004) in communities that differ from urban communities. This study was premised on the notion that little is known about rural schools in general, and the experiences of their teachers specifically. Furthermore, many stereotypes exist about rural teachers that need to be examined. There is often an assumption that university graduates do not teach in rural schools, yet I was aware of unqualified graduates practicing as teachers in rural schools. It is these unqualified graduate practicing teachers that interested me. It is important to learn about them from them - what they experience - and their understandings of those experiences. These experiences are significant to policies on TEPD.

Second, as indicated earlier on, my immediate experience is in the field of postgraduate teacher education. Given that new ways and ideas implemented often emanate from other countries, the study would fulfil this utilitarian value and consequently any feedback would be of maximum benefit to my work and responsibilities. Further, as current discourse focuses on moving towards a common education system in SADC countries (Hartshorne, 1998; Nhundu & Makoni, 1999; Salmon, 1992; Zvobgo, 2007), programmes should therefore equip student teachers with content and pedagogy, values, and attitudes that will enable them to operate beyond their national borders. This was also in line with the economic pressures Zimbabwe was experiencing which continued to force teachers to migrate to countries within the region and beyond. Murerwa, the then minister of Higher Education in Zimbabwe, confirms the position:

... While we want to train our teachers to fit into the local school communities, to be national players in the playing field or fit into the world domain of teaching, the greatest challenge the nation continues to face in this area is brain drain, where teachers who, having been trained at great expense leave the country to go and work elsewhere (2004:11).

Thus, providing an appropriate and firm grounding in professional development would enable these teachers to operate effectively in both the local and the external environments. In addition, while all sectors of the economy were affected by emigration of skilled manpower due to current economic challenges the country has been facing over the last few years, a study on brain drain has shown that the education and training sector is the worst affected (Murerwa, 2004). These teachers left, seeking greener pastures in the region and the Diaspora. Given this scenario, training and development programmes should equip trainees with adequate skills to operate in national, regional and international sectors within their specialization fields. Hence, the emphasis on improving education and training quality (Murerwa, 2004) to meet standards and demands in diverse local and global locations. It was intended that this study would, in a small way, contribute towards this vision.

The ministry's reforms reflected a shift in emphasis from increased access to increased quality of education and training, in line with the needs of a volatile environment brought about by globalisation and economic difficulties. Globalisation refers to the socio-economic linkages between places and or countries around the world (Manik, 2003) which has had a glaring influence in many developing countries such as Zimbabwe. Manik further notes that this epoch has paved the way for international labour migration, and as the economy has globalised, and people from around the world finding opportunities attractive to them, have crossed boundaries. The individuals decide to migrate following a cost-benefit calculation, as the main objective for migration is substantial monetary gain. Migration here should not only be viewed as a result of the push factors from the mother country, but also consequences of pull factors from the recipient country. With this in mind, it became critical to give teacher trainees knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that enhance performance in the global village, and this could be achieved through tapping some ideas both from within and without Zimbabwe and feeding them into the education and training system to enhance quality.

Third, very limited literature is available for policy makers regarding what unqualified practicing teachers in remote, rural communities have gone through, or are going through.

The daily challenges that they are confronted with, the stresses that they have to live with, and the experiences that they go through with regard to professional development in these unstable environments needed to be documented. The unqualified practicing teachers under the circumstances are expected to come up with effective and creative approaches to dealing with learners in the classroom and the entire school community as they try to interpret and implement policies and procedures as laid down by policy makers. The purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of what these teachers go through. It attempted to get behind the 'faces and skins' (Bhengu, 2005) of these teachers and to understand, through their eyes and stories, their professional development experiences in rural secondary schools.

Through interaction with colleagues at school level and the school communities, as well as with university lecturers regarding their initiation into the teaching profession, they can contribute to policy formulation, critique and practice as they relate to professional development. Given that the study was located within the larger international concerns and problems, it would inform policy makers, institutions as well as teacher development experts on issues of the professional development of unqualified practicing teachers in rural secondary schools.

Professionals, academics, and the research community need to understand not only how and what professional development experiences unqualified practicing teachers gain in rural secondary schools, but also how they interpret their experiences and understandings of professional development. Professional development of student teachers is ultimately intended to enhance instruction, and consequently student learning and achievement. Society wants good teachers because it wants and needs a well-educated population as well as effective learner learning and achievement. Ultimately, therefore, the test of adequate professional development and professionalism must always be the quality of education learners receive. For this reason by exploring the experiences of professional development of the PUPTs in rural schools, this case study could make a unique contribution to the knowledge on professional development experiences.

Professional development is central to becoming a teacher. Bell and Gilbert (1996) point out that professional development is the core of teacher development, which does not only focus on empowering student teachers with skills to handle teaching activities, but also provides for the development of beliefs and underlying conceptions of those teaching activities. Current educational reforms focus on quality and effective student learning and achievement. To this end, the need for teachers with adequate knowledge, information and skills to effectively perform their classroom practice role becomes critical. Professional development is the key tool that enables teacher trainees to acquire and develop the requisite content and pedagogy for effective use in their practice (Bell & Gilbert, 1996a; Shulman, 2004). Getting immediate information through the participants' experiences and their conceptions of those experiences could enhance the professional development processes.

Effective teachers have good command of their subject matter and a solid core of teaching skills. They have excellent instructional strategies supported by methods of goal setting, instructional planning, and classroom management; they know how to motivate, communicate, and work effectively with learners of diverse backgrounds and cultures. They are also aware of the value and use of technology in the classroom (Santrock, 2007). Such teachers can only be developed through appropriate professional development processes, appropriated by continuous improvement to which the participants contribute. Thus unqualified practicing teachers' voices needed to be heard and the issues engaged with, interrogated and critically analysed to provide some insights into their professional development experiences in rural secondary schools.

While a lot of work has been done and is currently being done on teacher training and development, most of it has focused on student teachers in initial conventional programmes in urban contexts. Much of the recent academic work has also focused on continued professional development of qualified teachers and other dimensions of teacher professional development. Apparently, there does not seem to be much work that has been done that targets PUPTs in rural schools, suggesting limited theory and research in this area. This is a vital and fairly unexplored area that I believe may shed some light on a

sorely neglected component of the education system. The study provides some insights into the processes of professional development of PUPTs in rural secondary schools, a neglected aspect in the literature. In view of the critical role of in-service teacher development in developing countries, this is the only means that these PUPTs can receive professional training.

Conclusion

The chapter set the scene by introducing the study and locating it in a bigger picture. Exploring professional development of PUPTs sheds some light on the wider processes related to challenges in education systems in developing countries with regard to shortages of qualified teachers, literacy levels, education for poor communities and the general challenges of teacher supply and demand. The chapter also outlined the study focus and purpose and defined the research question. The researcher's personal context and motivation as well as axiological assumptions were described. The rationale for this study concludes the chapter.

More detailed descriptions of the contexts are provided in Chapter 2, covering education provision in South Africa (SA) and Zimbabwe in general in pre- and post-liberation periods in the two systems as well as teacher education provision and the guiding policies. This is followed by a review of literature in Chapter 3 that focuses on the concept profession, its derivatives and, professional development. The chapter further discusses the concept rural, inclusive of challenges and needs of rural schools and teachers.

Chapter 4 provides the theoretical framework that informed data collection and analysis. The chapter discusses the Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) the theoretical framework for the study commencing with a brief historical development of the framework as traced from its first generation, through the second to the third generation. It is from the third generation that the study draws.

Chapter 5 presents research design and methodology. The chapter begins with identifying and discussing ethical considerations taken into account in the data generation process. The

choice to discuss ethics issues upfront was premised on the notion that ethics is a central component of this type of study. The chapter then presents the research design and methodology adopted for this study. It describes and justifies the research paradigm, qualitative framework and methodology, sampling procedures and the rationale for such sampling decisions. The data collection process and data analysis are discussed as well as the challenges met. The route to accessing participants is described as well as attempts made at ensuring rigour in the study. This chapter concludes with design limitations. .

Chapter 6 describes the research context and setting. It begins by describing the programmes PGDE/PGCE. This is followed by a definition of rurality as understood in the study. Following are detailed descriptions of research sites and participants. The chapter is summed up by the participants' biographical data as well as their education history that led them into teaching.

Chapter 7 presents and discusses the main findings. Using the key issues emerging from the literature review, and the theoretical framework as the analytical lens, findings to the key research questions posed by the study are presented and discussed. The issues emerging from the discussion of findings conclude the chapter.

Chapter 8 analyses and discusses professional development experiences by juxtaposing research findings and the theoretical framework. The chapter also identifies and discusses the lessons learnt and implications of the findings on professional development experiences of PUPTs in rural schools in Zimbabwe and SA in general, and the teachers studied in particular.

Chapter 2

Education and Teacher Education Provision: A Brief Overview of Zimbabwe and SA

Introduction

The previous chapter provided background and rationale for the study. The chapter argued that while the majority of children of school-going age are in rural schools, little is known about the professional development of teachers in rural schools in general, and the PUPTs in particular. This study therefore sought to understand how the PUPTs experience professional development in those settings by exploring how they engage in professional development practices at rural secondary school level. This chapter is informed by the notion that to understand teacher education development and provision as it relates to the PUPTs in rural schools, one needs to have a broad understanding of the history and development of the entire education provision in general and teacher education in particular in the two countries, i.e. South Africa and Zimbabwe. This chapter therefore discusses education and teacher education provision. The first section briefly traces and discusses education provision in pre- and post-colonial era in the two systems. There follows a synopsis of teacher education before and after liberation in these countries. The teacher education policies that shape and direct teacher education provision in both systems conclude the chapter.

Education Provision Before Liberation

A closer look at the provision of education in the two systems prior to liberation and independence reveals commonalities on the key issues to do with segregation and discrimination, mission education and provision of different education systems and structures. The two systems followed similar routes under the British colonial rule up to 1964 and 1912 in Zimbabwe and South Africa respectively. Education was classified and provided on racial lines and was designed to engender white supremacy by under-

educating the black child to protect the white compatriot from competition on professional, managerial, administrative and other capitalist roles (Mlahleki, 1995).

... Our policy, far from decreasing the supply of labour, should increase it both in quantity and efficiency... and develop simple skills in industry that do not open direct competition to Europeans (Zvobgo, 2007:11).

... To equip the Bantu to meet the demands which economic life will impose upon him. What is the point of teaching a Bantu child mathematics when it [sic] cannot use it in practice? Education must train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life (Education Rights Project, 2003:139).

Indeed, the quotations above clearly express the motives behind the kinds of education offered to black children that destined them for unskilled labour and thus eliminated their education as a path to social equality. It was essentially a preparation for specific opportunities in life i.e. to ensure adequate provision of cheap labour to the whites. The kinds of education for blacks in the two countries were entirely a missionary responsibility and without government aid until around 1848 in South Africa and the around 1920 in Zimbabwe. While learners learnt basic reading, writing and arithmetic, educating them was strategically designed to instil social discipline, obedience and value of work (Christie, 1991).

With the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in Rhodesia in 1964 paternal ties were broken with Britain and responsibility for African education was assumed by the Native Affairs Department. Kapfunde (1999) describes this dual education system that fostered colonial philosophy as a continuation, magnification and extension of the segregationist and discriminatory policies of the colonial 'masters' with their gross inequalities in educational resource allocation and distribution. On the South African landscape, when National Party assumed power in 1948, the dichotomous education system was formalized (Wolhuter, Lemmer et al., 2007). The Christian National education provided for whites, and Indians and Coloureds as another group, while the Department of Bantu Education took responsibility for black education, under Native Affairs. 1983 saw re-organization of whites' education into three separate own affairs services: Indians, Coloureds and whites. African education was sub-divided into six self-governing territorial departments plus a central department that administered black education in urban areas and

four nominally independent state departments (Wolhuter, Lemmer et al., 2007). The Department of National Education controlled policy and the budget as an arm of central government. All these systems operated “in more or less total isolation from each other until 1994” (Wolhuter, Lemmer et al., 2007:30).

Educational resource provision in the two systems SA and Zimbabwe was deliberately inequitably distributed in favour of the ruling minority. Resourcing was determined and classified on racial lines, with the blacks enduring a bleak and resource deprived education system, while education for the whites was very rich and comfortable and that of Indians and Coloureds satisfactorily provided for (Wolhuter, Lemmer et al., 2007; Nhundu, 1999). While black learners as a rule experienced impoverished school conditions with regards to the two systems in relation to resourcing, the situation was more intensified in rural than in urban schools where people are generally much more organized and vocal to draw attention, as opposed to the rural folk who have to deal with issues of geography and other numerous challenges.

The Post-Liberation Period

One of the central challenges that new governments face is to do with legacies. While the general historical educational trajectories throughout the colonial period were similar for the two systems, on gaining independence, the two countries adopted significantly different routes for addressing the inequalities and legacies from former governments. Both countries inherited the same kind of unequal systems in terms of under-resourcing, legacies, etc. Because of these separate routes pursued, the two systems are discussed separately.

The Zimbabwean focus was on access and universal primary education and operated under particular pressures to provide schools and teachers in poor communities that had been under-resourced. The government therefore embarked on a massive expansion of and heavy investment in education (Mlahleki, 1995). Accordingly extending educational facilities and resources to the black majority was one of the primary targets and, within a year, the new government had introduced a set of educational reforms designed to redress

the disparities and inequalities inherited from the colonial regime (Zvobgo, 2007). The dual education system was abolished and several strategies adopted to operationalise the policy of the massive expansion of the education policy (Mlahleki, 1995; Nhundu, 1999 ; Zvobgo, 2007). At a systemic level the Zimbabwean education system remained largely intact with a relatively stable curriculum and teacher education system. The standard of education had been consistently high in the black education prior to independence and, that remained the system that went forward even in those schools where the PUPTs are teaching and are under-resourced and isolated, they were not educationally inferior in terms of the curriculum and would have been familiar with the curriculum.

On the South African front, to a large extent, the issue of access had been addressed in the expansion of the system during apartheid in the 1970s. The focus of post-independence was therefore to get people to go back to school and to reform the apartheid school curriculum. Curriculum reform was therefore across the board, but in many respects the white system was closer to the new system than the black. Legislative and policy reforms had to occur to fulfil the constitutional obligation of equivalent education provision. The purpose of such legislative reform is best described in the preamble to the South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996 in:

... This country requires a new national system which will redress past injustices and provide an education of progressively high quality for the development of our people's talents and capabilities, advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism, discrimination and intolerance and eradication of poverty ...

Thus, a new single, national education system was established under the Ministry of Education in May 1994 and organized and managed by the national Department of Education and nine provincial departments. However, with the new curriculum, under-resourced schools for blacks in SA have a double challenge to address under-resourcing and deal with a profound curriculum and policy change.

This section has provided in brief, the historical background of education provision and development. The next section discusses teacher education provision and development in the two systems.

Teacher Education Provision: The Pre-Liberation Era

While teacher education in the two systems was along racial lines, differences in the provision are evident, for this reason they are discussed separately. In the Zimbabwean context teachers for white schools were either national graduates from foreign universities and colleges such as Rhodes University in South Africa, or were imported from overseas (Niven, 1976). Black teacher education was in the hands of the missionaries who offered a series of disjointed and piecemeal, generally small, isolated, inadequately staffed and poorly funded teacher training that was coordinated and organized by teacher educationists with limited professional knowledge and skills (Niven, 1976; Siyakwazi, 1979). Most mission centres were located in rural areas and graduate deployment was generally on religious grounds. Isolation emanated from denominational separateness and control by different responsible authorities (Niven, 1976; Siyakwazi, 1979). Teachers graduated with low-level skills and knowledge as clearly articulated by Niven below:

Denominations guarded jealously their small isolated units which produced teachers for their schools and for the ministry of Education to ensure sufficient teachers and provide a steady growth rate for primary schools ... teachers trained in scattered isolated foundations as general purpose teachers with little professional qualification and no special status (1976:235).

However, with more economic, social, educational and political developments in the early fifties becoming rife, formal coordinated teacher education became imperative and the first venture into higher education was the establishment of the University of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1956, and teacher training beyond Cambridge School Certificate (Niven, 1976). Noteworthy was the fact that university entry was determined by A-Level results for the blacks notwithstanding that for the whites there was an option of university entry after matriculation examinations at Form 5 (Zvobgo, 2007). By 1968, there was a greater demand for graduate teachers and this led to the launch of a Diploma in Education as a temporary expedient to produce well trained college graduates with a few selected to proceed to university to undertake advanced academic work leading to the award of a degree (Niven, 1976). Notwithstanding all these efforts, secondary teacher demand could still not be met particularly in rural schools.

On the South African scenario, teacher education provision in colleges and universities was along racial lines (Carrim, Postma et al., 2003). While white teacher education from the fifties remained in the provinces and black teacher education following racial classifications, Indian and Coloured teachers obtained training from their respective colleges (Parker, 2003). The responsibility of African Education lay under the Department of Bantu Education and later homeland governments assumed control of colleges within their areas, which were basically extensions of the schooling system (Parker, 2003). Divergences in the provinces and homelands were evident and several shortcomings emerged from this system:

- Numerous varied curricula and qualifications;
- Absence of nationally coordinated teacher supply and demand;
- Ineffective quality assurance and accountability procedures;
- Varied per capita costs and serious distortions in supply;
- An abnormally large pool of unemployed primary school teachers (50 000) and a serious shortage of secondary science teachers (Parker, 2003:20).

An urgent need for rationalizing and reorganizing systems and processes, and redeploying teachers to address urban teacher oversupply and rural teacher undersupply came up (Lewin, Samuel et al., 2003). The teacher undersupply to rural schools had prompted hiring of professionally unqualified university and high school graduates to serve as teachers. The next section discusses teacher education after independence.

Teacher Education Provision in Zimbabwe: The Post-Liberation Era

On attaining independence, virtually all African countries embarked on a massive expansion of educational provision at all levels including the higher education sector. Zimbabwe was no exception. The massive expansion of the education system gave rise to teacher demand that outstripped the supply from the conventional teacher's colleges. Consequently, various teacher education programmes and models were introduced to run either concurrently or subsequently namely: the Zimbabwe Integrated National Teacher Education Course (ZINTEC), the 2-Year in, 2-Year out Model, the Attachment Model (the 1.1.1.) the 2-5-2 Model and Zimbabwe/Cuba teacher training programme.

The ZINTEC used the distance education mode to train pre-service, non-graduate teachers for primary schools and its launch was directly related to making primary education free and compulsory. For this reason the complimentary ZINTEC student teachers were deployed in rural primary schools subsequent to an initial sixteen-week on-campus orientation courses and, received the bulk of their training 'in situ' (Chivore, 1993).

In the 2-Year in, 2-Year out Model, student teachers were in college during the 1st and 3rd years and on school experience during the 2nd and 4th years. Deployment targeted the needy rural schools and during school experience trainees assumed full responsibility of classes but were attached to a mentor. The model extended duration of training from 3 to 4 years and was in operation until the early 1990s. From the mid-1990s, the teacher education system reverted back to the 3-year Teacher Education Model and adopted the 1.1.1. Attachment Model where students were on campus during the 1st and 3rd years and on school placement in the 2nd year. Student teachers worked under a mentor without teaching loads of their own, as was the case with the 2-year in, 2-year out Model. According to Chiromo (2004) student teachers were treated as 'supernumeraries'. Contrarily, the Attachment Model to some extent brought closer cooperation between participating schools and teacher education institutions and it was the mentor who was generally expected to provide for and nurture professional growth. Further, the Attachment Model offered student teachers a number of opportunities: deepened their specialized knowledge, encouraged reflective practice, stimulated their professional development; heightened their confidence and enabled them to link theory with practice (Bourdillon, 1999).

The 2-5-2 a School-Based Model was instituted in 2003, and is justified by the then Minister of Higher education as follows:

...To improve teacher education programmes and build a quality teaching force, colleges have adopted a 2.5.2. Model of teacher training. The approach gives trainees more time in the teaching field and emphasizes on the job training, this is the direction that we are going, to control numbers of unqualified temporary teachers serving in our classrooms (Murerwa 2004:13).

The 2.5.2 Model ensures that student teachers are in college during the first and last two school terms, and five terms are spent in the field on school experience. A school term is

four calendar months in the Zimbabwean Education System. During the greater part of their training, while on school experience, student teachers do not have their own teaching loads but are attached to school based mentors and receive tuition through the Open and Distance Learning (Murerwa, 2004). All except the ZINTEC Model were instituted in primary and secondary teachers' colleges alike and student teacher deployment targeted mainly rural schools and communities.

The Zimbabwe/Cuba teacher-training programme provided another avenue for training secondary science teachers. Beginning in the mid-1980s, groups (100-200) of high school graduates were taken to Cuba annually to study for teaching degrees in science education. After about ten years, the programme was moved to Zimbabwe and a new university of science education was established in 1996. Notwithstanding all these efforts to provide professionally qualified teachers, the rural secondary teacher demand could still not be fulfilled. The next section examines teacher deployment.

Teacher Deployment

One dimension of massification of education at independence was the construction of secondary schools in rural areas where no secondary schools had been envisaged before to enable primary school graduates to be absorbed in schools nearer their homes (Mumbengegwi, 1995). The Zimbabwean populace applauded this new development, however, a critical need for secondary school teachers surfaced. While the University of Zimbabwe horizontally expanded its enrolments and offerings at general undergraduate level to produce more graduates, it could not produce many professionally qualified teachers due to the limited capacity of the institution. However, with time more universities were established and graduates with teaching oriented degrees joined the secondary teaching force in the new rural secondary schools without teaching qualifications. By 1999, of the 8 386 University Graduates in the secondary school workforce, about 4 035 (48%) did not have a professional teaching qualification (Nziramanga, 1999). Thus, to complement the teacher education efforts, ZOU launched an Initial In-service School-Based teacher education programme, PGDE in its ten Regional Centres in the country in

August 2000 to cater for PUPTs in rural secondary schools. It is this category of teachers that are the focus of the present study.

This critical need to meet the severe teacher demand in rural schools gave rise to the ministerial 'New Teacher Deployment Policy,' targeting rural schools. The Zimbabwe Government therefore became forceful about new entrants into the teaching profession taking teaching posts in rural areas (Zimbabwe Ministry of Higher Education, 2002). After a three-year minimum rural experience, teachers may seek transfer into towns/cities. The Zimbabwe Government's stance on rural teaching experience in addition to addressing the critical teacher shortage, emanates from a background that rural schools are confronted by challenges that are different from urban schools because of issues of resource provision, poverty and marginalization (Murerwa, 2004). Further, these schools do not receive adequate support, yet they serve 80% of the nation's learners who are expected to compete with urban schools in attaining good results in public examinations.

The account given above does not engage much with the politics of education during the war of liberation the 'Chimurenga' and after independence. Education was not within the Zimbabwean political frontline. There might be a number of explanations. First, teachers like all civil servants were apolitical thus were not allowed by the law to engage in any politics. Hence, because of the desire to keep their jobs, they did not engage in politics publicly. Second, notwithstanding the impediments and bottlenecks in the African education system, the system of education modelled on the British provided good quality education. Given this situation, the education system remained intact. On attainment of independence, other than expansion and massification to provide access, the British model of education remained relatively undismantled.

This section has provided a synopsis of post-independence teacher education provision in Zimbabwe, this next section discusses teacher education provision in post-liberated South Africa.

Teacher Education Provision in SA: The Post-Liberation Era

The 1994, newly elected South African government inherited a complex web of the teacher education system that was segregated, unequal and inefficient, fragmented and expensive, characterized by glaring cost discrepancies across institutions (Maistry, 2005). There was evident diversity in the nature and structure of curricula and qualifications given that each pursued its own provincial curricula and qualifications (Parker, 2003). Teacher rationalization, reorganization and redeployment processes became even more critical. The rationalization resulted in establishment of provincial government departments and a commissioned national teacher audit to assess teacher supply and demand (Maistry, 2005; Parker, 2003).

Subsequent to this, radical structural transformation that shifted teacher education from provincial governance to national competence occurred in 1996 to consequently rationalize and regularize curriculum and qualifications (Lewin, Samuel et al., 2003). Unprecedented decline in enrolments registered in colleges and university faculties of education, issues of relevance and quality of the many offerings as well as inconsistencies and apparent lack of regulation threatened the viability of institutions (Parker, 2003). These were pointers to the need for incorporation of these colleges as sub-divisions of the then existing universities as opposed to autonomous colleges. Subsequently, the incorporation of teacher education colleges into the then existing higher education universities was instituted (Parker, 2003). With all these challenges, teacher shortages were more intensified in rural than in urban schools given the urban teacher oversupply and rural teacher undersupply (Lewin, Samuel et al., 2003).

During this period, the distinction between pre-service and in-service education and training was blurred. Parker (2003) attempted to clarify this pointing out that under-qualified and un-qualified teachers are all pre-service students in so far as they are not qualified, but are, however, in service by virtue of their being employed as teachers. Thus, from 2001, the Department of Education focused on teacher in-servicing, upgrading and/or re-skilling targeting the many unqualified serving teachers and unemployed educators who

required retraining in preparation for employment (Parker, 2003; Reddy, 2003a). This was premised on the notion that teacher education should address national needs and issues of teacher supply and demand and allow the programmes to take place in schools where these unqualified teachers were practicing while pursuing their studies part-time (Lewin, Samuel et al., 2003). The PGCE mixed mode falls into this category of teacher education programmes that provided an avenue for eligible graduates to acquire a teaching qualification while on the job, thus directly responding to identified national and regional needs and shortfalls. It is the students on the PGCE mixed mode programme and teaching in rural schools that are the target for this study.

This section has provided broadly the educational context of the general education and teacher education provision in the two education systems pre- and post-liberation. The following section discusses the guiding teacher education policies.

Zimbabwe Teacher Education Policy Provision

At the time of writing the government of Zimbabwe did not have a standing policy on teacher education. Teacher development was guided by the Education Act 1999. It is from this Act that the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education (MOHTE) draws its summary of policies for teacher education (Murerwa, 2004). The Zimbabwean MOHTE summary of policies encompasses the entire ministry inclusive of colleges of education. The different institutions draw from these broad ministerial summaries, interpreting and developing their own frameworks for professional development of their student teachers. Given that these policy summaries are often couched in brief and unclear language, institutional interpretations may vary. Broadly, MOHTE undertakes to provide, regulate and facilitate higher and tertiary education and training through planning, development and implementation of ministry policies as well as resourcing and managing institutions for effective individual economic and skill requirements to realize their full teacher potential (Education, 2004).

The goal of teacher education in Zimbabwe is to lay a foundation for human resource development. It aims to produce morally upright, creative and reflective teachers able to

participate actively in developing a creative and morally sound nation, prepared to meet all the political, social and economic challenges of the 21st Century (Education, 1996 -1997, 2004). The policy draws from the philosophy of holistic education (unhu/ubuntu) and is founded on professionalism, responsibility, patriotism, moral uprightness and diligence. This therefore provides a foundation for the development of a critical thinker, reflective practitioner and patriot.

The system is intended to empower an individual to achieve the threshold of competent participation and involvement in classroom practice, which encompasses the initial development of basic competences, attributes, commitments and characteristics of the teaching profession (Murerwa, 2004). The policy further endeavours to develop a quality teacher and cornerstone of educational development that positively shapes the Zimbabwean society and is globally competitive (Murerwa, 2004). The teacher has to effectively, draw upon a diverse range of pedagogical skills and human qualities of empathy, patience and humility to compliment authority (Education, 1996-1997). This is premised on the notion that when a child's first teacher is poorly trained and motivated, the foundations on which subsequent learning should be built, become unsound (Murerwa, 2004). Positive attitudes, values and skills are achieved through four strategies. Firstly, there is development and production of innovative cadres who become agents for education development and social transformation to make Zimbabwe competitive in the global market. Secondly, pre-service and in-service programmes for teacher education are promoted to enhance teacher quality of performance and professionalism. Thirdly, teacher education curricula have been diversified so that teachers are innovative and responsive to changing needs of the Zimbabwean society within the global village. Finally, efficient and effective educational management systems for Zimbabwean teacher education and development have been established (Education, 1996 -1997).

In relation to structure, the Ministry expanded teacher education offered at all colleges and universities with departments/schools of infant education. January 2003 saw the introduction of a 2-5-2 Model of teacher education to pursue a shift towards school-based teacher development and strengthen relationships between schools and institutions in a bid

to share teacher education responsibility (Murerwa, 2004). The 2.5.2 Model has been discussed above. Universities should, depending on the intended type and level of teacher, operate within the above parameters but showing a significant shift towards more school-based teacher education programmes (Murerwa, 2004). MOHTE and the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture (MOESC) concur that the following constitute significant attributes expected to be developed during teacher education, which attributes a new teacher carries into the Zimbabwean classroom:

- A moral (unhu/ubuntu), upright, tolerant and cooperative team player
- A self motivated learning facilitator, innovator and assessor
- A trustworthy, resourceful and creative a life-long learner
- An effective communicator and classroom practitioner
- Highly responsible, accountable and articulate performer
- Able to promote peace and solve conflicts
- A partner and patriot, respectful of others and property
- Self-manager, entrepreneur, sympathizer and empathizer
- With personal integrity, good judgment and honesty (Education, 2004).

Universities are required to follow the above broad guidelines, but closely following their individual charters that, inter alia, define key administrative structures and mandate for the university and the University Council (Nziramasanga, 1999). The National Council for Higher Education through the university council ensures maintenance of appropriate academic and professional standards in the institutions by establishing common student admission procedures and overseeing all processes within the Ministry framework as outlined above inclusive of standardization, recognition and equation of degrees and diplomas. Thus, university administration is decentralized to institutions where university councils, faculty boards and other structures formulate, implement and monitor policy. The ministry generally expects active collaboration between and within universities, with overt evidence of sharing facilities and expertise to foster community participation that universities should develop and uphold. Such linkages may be pursued through coordination of programmes, exchange of academic personnel and students, and collaborative staff development programmes.

The academic and research environment enables creation occasions for exposing new ways of viewing and interrogating issues and accepted and cherished practices and traditions and both national and international conferences are fostered through the Research Council

(Education, 2004). The quality of teaching, learning and research provide essential yardsticks for university performance. While the National Council for Higher Education monitors teaching and learning, the Research Council monitors and coordinates research and publishes Higher Education performance indicators.

This section has presented a summary of the Zimbabwean teacher education policy, the following section discusses SA teacher education policy framework.

SA Teacher Education Policy Provision

The Ministerial Committee on Teacher Education Report (2005) provides a Framework for SA Teacher education (HSRC SA, 2005). It is from that framework that the following discussion is based. The Framework distinguishes between Initial Professional Education and Training (IPET) and Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD). CPTD is an ongoing process intended to revitalize and improve professional practices of qualified teachers. IPET prepares individuals to reach a threshold of competent practice and participation in the profession. It encompasses initial development of competences and commitments essential to the teaching profession. Thus, the framework views teacher education as a life-long process with two components (IPET and CPTD) that should be considered as coherent individual systems but with different agendas (HSRC SA, 2005). It is students on the IPET PGCE mixed mode programme who are the target of this study.

The policy for teacher education is designed to build a teaching profession capable of meeting the needs of a democratic South Africa in the 21st century. The over-arching goal of the policy is to equip teachers with the relevant and essential skills to meet demands of classroom practice and continually foster professional competence and practice. The policy draws heavily on the Ministerial Committee on Teacher Education (2005) (HSRC SA, 2006). It provides an overall strategy for effective student recruitment, teacher retention and professional development to meet social and economic needs. The goal is to build a community of committed, competent and highly efficient, ethical and professional teachers in the provision of quality education. The underpinning principles as outlined in the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) call on the teacher to be:

- A specialist in a particular learning area, subject or phase
- A specialist in teaching and learning
- A specialist in assessment
- A curriculum developer
- A leader, manager and administrator
- A scholar and life-long learner
- A professional who plays community, citizenship and pastoral roles (SA, 2006)

The entire policy is underpinned and driven by the notion that teachers drive quality in any education system. Research indicates that teacher professional development is effective through engagement in reflection in, on and about their practice coupled with a school-based component and well-coordinated activities and processes (Lieberman, 1993). Education departments need to provide supportive conducive environments for such preparation and development to happen. With the assistance of their professional body: the South African Council for Educators (SACE), teachers assume responsibility of their personal staff-development, identify needy areas and exploit all available opportunities at their disposal for their personal professional growth and guided by the Integrated Quality Management System (HSRC SA, 2006).

The National Teacher Audit of 1995 reported fragmented teacher education provision, a 'fit' between supply and demand and, large numbers of both un-qualified and under-qualified teachers. Reports further indicate that the majority of teachers are not adequately empowered to meet demands of a growing democracy in the 21st Century global village, notwithstanding the improved qualification profile of the teaching force. The President's Education Initiative Research Project (1999) discovered that the majority of SA teachers had limited conceptual knowledge, manifesting in poor grasp of disciplinary knowledge displayed by lack of accuracy and factual errors in content and concepts in lesson delivery (HSRC SA, 2006). This lack or limited conceptual and content knowledge may impact negatively on learner achievement levels.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss education and teacher education provision pre- and post-liberation as well as the teacher education policies in the two education systems.

SA and Zimbabwean education systems have been significantly shaped by the apartheid and colonial systems respectively. Almost 30 and 15 years after independence for Zimbabwe and South Africa respectively, features of these former systems' legacies are still experienced. In Zimbabwe, elements of the British curriculum are evident in the education system, while in South African it has been difficult to redress the legacies related to under-resourcing particularly in rural schools.

The discussion above further indicates that the teacher education policies both of which were developed after liberation are informed by the notion that teachers constitute the drivers of education quality in any system. Both policies draw on holistic education - the Zimbabwean system through teacher attributes focuses more on the teacher as a person while the SA policy is apparently more into the practice. Teacher education in both systems is located in higher education, however, in South Africa teacher education exists mainly in universities and the Zimbabwean scenario presents teacher education situated in two sites: colleges and universities with the greater proportion of teachers coming out of colleges.

Having provided the educational contexts with regard to the history and development of the two education systems as well as the guiding policies as a whole, it would be worth looking at the main concepts in this study: profession and professional development and, the particular component of that system which is the focus of my study namely: rural schools and the specific challenges that emerge from those contexts. The next chapter therefore presents a review of related literature around these aspects.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

Introduction

Through an exploration of twelve teachers, the study sought to understand the professional development experiences of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools in particular the manner in which these teachers engage in professional development practices in a rural secondary school. In the previous chapter I discussed the general education and teacher education provision, as well as the teacher education policies guiding the two systems. This was to provide a contextual background to enhance understanding of teachers' professional development. This chapter is premised on the notion that to develop a deeper understanding of PUPTs' professional development experiences, it is necessary to review related literature around what and how professional development occurs.

Presentation of literature in this study has not followed the standard pattern of providing all literature in one chapter. Instead, part of the literature comes through in various chapters as an integral part of discussion, data presentation and analysis. Thus, this chapter only examines four broad issues relating to teacher professional development. First, the chapter attempts to unpack the concept profession and its derivatives. Second, it examines the meaning of professional development. Third, the chapter unpacks the concept rural to try and understand rural teacher needs and forms of support. Finally, teachers' conceptions of professional development in a rural secondary school are discussed.

The Concept Profession

Before establishing the meaning of professional development, it is important to clarify the concept profession. It also becomes important to understand its derivatives: unprofessional and professional, professionalism and professionalization. Professions are so named due to pertinent features to their classification, and their statuses and labels change according to

the needs and complexities of society (Ndhlovu, 1999; Nicholls, 2000) . People have viewed and defined the concept ‘profession’ in diverse ways based on a range of criteria. Sykes (1998) defines profession as a vocation or calling, especially one that involves some branch of advanced learning. Thus, teaching has often been described as a profession, notwithstanding that in other contexts it fails to measure up to the standard definitions and criterion of what a profession is.

In the description of teaching as a profession, one needs to unpack a little bit more what a professional is and how different people have understood the concept. With these different conceptions there has been a lot of debate around the meaning of the term and what it means to be a professional. Nicholls identifies four broad categories that typify the concept profession:

1. Cognitive dimension, which incorporates a body of knowledge and techniques as well as the particular training required
2. Corporate dimension with common applications of identity, commitment, interests and loyalties
3. Evaluative dimension in which professions display autonomy and prestige
4. Normative dimension incorporating self-regulation through a code of ethics within a service orientation (2000:40).

Nicholls hastens to point out that the distinctions are not definitive as the term remains one of numerous concepts fraught with ideology. Hoyle and Megarry’s (1987) definition is similar to Nicholls’s but extends the corporate dimension by pointing out that a profession becomes a profession if it performs crucial social and moral functions and exercises the functions in non-routine situations arising from new circumstances and challenges.

Drawing on both Nicholls’s, and Hoyle and Megarry’s broad categories, in this study, teaching is viewed as a profession as it meets, to some extent, these broad categories. First, teachers possess a considerable degree of skill based on a special theoretical body of knowledge and continued research, and their professional teaching qualification is attained through an amalgam of theory and practice that processes and inculcate intrinsic motivation and altruism (Ndhlovu, 1999; Zvobgo, 2007). The teaching profession may be viewed as a calling characterised by academic and technical competence from some specialised training in higher education which bestow on them a sense of devotion, class, prestige and honour (Sykes, 1998). Day summarises this aspect by saying that; “... it is their education and training that equip teachers with commitment and action by increasing

their understanding” (1997:202). As a result of these esoteric bodies of knowledge being linked to values and needs of society, teachers develop some devotion to the service of the public above and beyond financial gains (Sykes, 1998; ZIMTA, 2009). It is from these qualities that teachers offer a social service throughout life (SACE, 2004; Sykes, 1998; ZIMTA, 2009). Teaching therefore fulfils intellectual professional activities that carry a lot of responsibility for learners, the school, the community and the field in which one is a specialist (Adendorff, Mason, et al., 1999; Nicholls, 2000).

Second, teacher’s concern for children is grounded in relationships - the connectedness of learners to teachers (Day, 1997). Day further points out that as an interpersonal activity teaching is meant to shape and mould individuals through a range of pedagogical skills. What people become as persons is through whatever it is that is taught and, as the teacher partakes in shaping what a person becomes, the moral good of every learner is fundamental in all teaching situations. Through their dedication to good practice day-by-day in classroom practice, teachers indirectly assist their students to develop intellectual and moral capacities to respond to social pressures that may come their way (Eraut, 2008). This task of contributing to shaping what people become morally implies moral sense, moral vision and moral motive (Sockett, 1993). Teaching then has an essentially moral purpose in the sense that it is concerned with the good of pupils. Day (1997) defines four dimensions of moral rights and duties of the teacher’s professional role as: community, knowledge, accountability and ideals. The community provides a framework of relationships, knowledge is the expertise with technique subservient to moral criteria and accountability is answerability to individuals and the public and ideals refers to portraying a standard or model of excellence.

Third, most professions enjoy a considerable amount of autonomy; however, practical autonomy for the teaching profession is limited to the four walls of their classroom. Broadly, the autonomy that teachers enjoy may relate to relative independence of the profession as a whole, maybe from some political controls and on the part of the practitioner, freedom from external control and interference over their day to day professional practice (Sockett, 1993). Further, professional bodies have some amount of

autonomy for the collective body of teachers, but, such powers are chiefly regulatory and developmental (registering and disciplining members) (Adendorff, Mason et al., 1999).

Fourth, while teaching may not generally be viewed as an ideal profession on equal terms with medicine and law, it is placed together with these 'ideal' professions on the continuum (Hoyle & Megarry, 1987). Teachers are seen as belonging to professional associations and are bound by ethical standards and procedures. The view is confirmed by Adendorff, Mason et al. (1999), and Ndlovu (1999) who argue that teachers belong to a group of individuals who should adhere to high ethical standards and uphold themselves to and are accepted as governed by a code of ethics. Further, teachers possess a strong feeling of identity, class, honour and solidarity, manifested in their teacher associations to secure a monopoly of the service and, in the codes of ethics, they entrust the responsibility of the profession to the collectivity that it serves.

Professionally Unqualified Teacher

There is a lot of debate around what a profession is and what it means to be a professional. In the context of this study there are two dimensions to it. One is related to professionally unqualified and the other relates to a qualified professional teacher. Given that these teachers are professionally unqualified, that in itself assumes that there is such a thing as becoming a qualified professional teacher. The term unqualified as defined by Sykes (1998) refers to individuals who are not officially competent to perform given activities. This definition would include all those individuals practicing in schools in "emergency" situations who may not have attained any additional or relevant teaching qualifications after high school. In this study, the PUPTs possess a body of disciplinary knowledge acquired through intensive and advanced study in higher education, at degree level. They are in classroom practice and draw on the acquired systematic body of knowledge but do not have the professional teaching qualification, hence they are professionally unqualified. The study therefore understands that one can be unofficially a teacher who is unqualified. 'Unofficially', because one does not have professional qualifications, and can only be officially qualified after attainment of the teaching qualification.

In this context, teacher certification is intended to signal teaching qualification and acquisition of appropriate teaching knowledge based on measurable, demonstrable excellence as coded in some set of standards and assessed through objective evidence of teaching. However, notwithstanding the absence of paper qualifications, they are teachers because they carry out all teaching duties, roles and responsibilities within the classroom, school and 'greater community' contexts. Further, these people construct their identities as teachers, albeit they are officially not teachers because they are not qualified. Thus, while one can be a teacher, he or she cannot be regarded a professional teacher in the absence of professional qualifications. Under-qualified teacher in this context refers to those teachers who completed an acceptable number of years of teacher training and possess valid professional teaching qualifications but may be viewed as holding inadequate qualifications to practice teaching at certain levels.

Professionally Qualified Teacher

Sykes (1998) views the term qualified as referring to those individuals that are officially recognized as possessing knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and competences to engage in given tasks. Implied in this definition when applied to teachers is possession of pedagogy within the wider domain of knowledge, skills, attitudes and competences. While one can learn and get qualified through experience, official recognition may be through accreditation of prior learning where, for instance, a collection of artifacts or a portfolio may be subjected to some assessment based on some criteria to determine the experiential learning. This will then result in a formal professional qualification signalled by certification. Thus, the concepts professional and professional development, have to be understood within this context, as a part of the nature of what it means to be a professional. A professional teacher would therefore be a person earning a living from performance and practice of the profession – teaching, for instance, enables one to earn a living from performance of the teaching roles. Thus teachers are labelled professionals because they belong to a trained profession, have the appropriate competence, expertise or consciousness of trained individuals. Ndhlovu (1999) describes a professional as one who

qualifies in terms of set standards of education and professional training of the occupation as well as its behaviour patterns and conventions.

One would therefore view a professional teacher as one who has acquired the required academic education and training and understands facts and information, as well as appropriate behaviour and deportment of the teaching profession. The Zimbabwe Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education requires that professional teachers, in addition to disciplinary knowledge, must possess educated competences and abiding commitments needed for successful engagement in classroom professional practice (Education, 2004). They are therefore expected to display evident qualities of commitment to the ideals of the teaching profession, equipped with competences to follow those ideals in diverse circumstances.

There has been a long history of debate around what professional means, assuming an abstract debate but at times, particularly in the SA context, adopting an institutional form with regard to the way different organisations have framed their mandates around the concept. A lot of debate in SA has been revolving around whether to label teachers as professionals or whether to regard them as workers. These conceptions have played themselves out in the form of unions versus professional associations based on the way in which teachers are organized. The South Africa Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU), for instance, has maintained a strong stance on teachers being workers and are affiliated to the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) where they prioritise labour relations issues. The rival National Professional Teachers' Organization of South Africa (NAPTOSA) signals that they are a professional organization as opposed to a trade union. So with these hot debates, some commentators such as Jansen (1998) have argued that to some extent the fact that SADTU has pushed through the worker stance has resulted in de-professionalization of teaching and lack of professional ethics among teachers. Other observers say it is a non-debate as both organisations are concerned with professional and labour relations matters and point to a false dichotomy in which teachers are viewed both as workers and professionals.

However, for my purposes, professional has a moral and social dimension, a body of knowledge, qualifications and a skill level, some sense of autonomy and an identification with colleagues within the profession that goes straight beyond employer/employee relationships to a sense of being part of a local, wider national or even international community. Having understood the concept profession and the distinction between a professionally unqualified and a qualified teacher, it is necessary to understand derivatives of the concept profession namely: professionalism and professionalization.

Professionalism

Within these debates around the meaning of the concept profession and what it means to be professional, professionalism in relation to being a teacher has also come up. Teachers are employees and civil servants. The skill that is involved makes an individual a professional and makes more sense in relation to teachers. Gultig (1999) defines professionalism not as a state or condition but as something to strive for, an ongoing goal that enables practitioners to remain current with trends and developments in education.

Professionalism therefore involves commitment by members of a profession to enhance their status and the strategies that they adopt to achieve that goal for the benefit of both the client, ie the student, and the practitioner, the teacher. Said gives a definition of professionalism that captures ideas of commitment as noted by Hoyle and Megarry (1987) and Nicholls (2000) as follows:

By professionalism I mean thinking of your work as an intellectual, as something you do for a living, between the hours of nine and five, with one eye on the clock, and another cocked at what is considered to be proper, professional behaviour – not rocking the boat, not straying outside the accepted paradigms or limits, making yourself marketable and above all presentable, hence uncontroversial, apolitical and objective ... (Said, 1994:49).

According to McBride (1996:213) teacher professionalism encompasses notions of professional accountability. He outlines some notions of accountability embedded in professionalism as involving first:

- A moral commitment to serve the interests of the learners by reflecting on their well being as well as their progress and deciding how best that progress can be promoted or fostered
- A professional obligation to review periodically the nature of effectiveness of one's practice in order to improve the quality of one's management, pedagogy and decision making
- A professional obligation to continue to develop one's practical knowledge both by personal reflection and through interaction with others.

For purposes of this study, professionalism is to do with ethical and moral behaviour, honesty, empathy, accountability, commitment, devotion and conscientiousness, desire for life-long learning and enquiry, relational dimensions, interdependence and agency and resourcefulness. Professionalization that is discussed in the following section is to do with recognition.

Professionalization

Professionalization is about public and legal recognition of the professional status of teaching (Gultig, 1999). It attempts to establish a governing body and to strengthen credentials, determining boundaries and demanding certain qualifications, "... to restrict numbers by imposing ever higher entrance qualification requirements ..." (Gultig, 1999:6). Thus professionalization focuses on achievement of social status, social rights, positions and gains. It also emphasizes professionalism of teachers and consequently enhancement of effectiveness in classroom practice. Critics (Adendorff, Mason et al., 1999; Carrim, 2003) of professionalization however argue that professionalism is neither enhanced, nor do learners benefit from professionalization. Professionalism refers to attitudes, views and perceptions towards practice and the degree of knowledge, skill and experience that they bring with them into the practice. Professional development, on the other hand, aims at improving the quality of service offered to others. The concept is discussed in detail in the following section.

The Concept Professional Development

Guskey states that "...never before has there been a greater recognition of the importance of professional development for teachers ..." (Guskey, 2002:2). Every proposal to reform,

restructure or transform schools currently highlights professional development as the major vehicle for effecting improved student learning. With this increased emphasis comes increased awareness of the need for professional development for unqualified and qualified teachers alike to enable improved learner achievement levels. The following section discusses the meaning and purpose of professional development.

The Meaning and Purposes of Professional Development

First, Sayed (2001) defines professional development as referring to activities that enhance development or improvement of knowledge and skills base for teachers intended to foster classroom practice and learner achievement. Teachers therefore acquire the essential knowledge and skills, develop confidence and emotional intelligence critical to professional thought, planning and practices in their classroom practice (Hargreaves, 1992; Vonk, 1995). This resonates with Evans's (2002) conception where professional development involves new theoretical and teaching ideas, trying out, evaluation and practice over a period with critical reflection, collaboration, support and feedback. Second, through the process, teachers develop an understanding of the 'why' they perform certain actions in their classroom and this fosters development of strategic understanding for professional judgement that enables the teacher to explain the 'what', 'how' and 'why' (Shulman, 1987).

Third, professional development is a situated and an on-going process directed towards cultivating, upholding and, leading each individual teacher along the appropriate route to professionalism (Lieberman & Mace, 2008b; Lieberman & McLaughlin, 1992; Little, 2000). The aspect of life-long learning in professional development and practice implies a direct link between teachers as learners, teachers in practice, and teachers in learner learning. Professional development is a continuing process with the purpose of equipping teachers to move into an education leadership and management career path (Mestry & Singh, 2007). The inherent situated-ness promotes development of communities and any challenges are viewed as new learning opportunities that are collectively addressed (Day & Sachs, 2004; Whitty, 2006).

Fourth, Day and Sachs (2004) point to the centrality of professional development in aiding staff motivation, commitment and retention through creation of job satisfaction. They cite extension, renewal and growth as major functions of professional development that are closely connected. Extension refers to new knowledge and skills into the teacher's repertoire. Growth implies development of high-level expertise, and renewal implies transformation and change of knowledge and practices. They allude to the Australian success story where professional development has been linked to high levels of commitment and increased productivity and, success attributed to relevance to teacher needs, collegiality and control, active learning, and longer time frames for action, reflection and reflection cycles, and acknowledgement of need. Needs identification by teachers themselves coupled with some degree of ownership and control through their involvement in decision-making contributed to its success. An attempt has been made to define the concept professional development; the next section discusses how the process occurs in four realms: formal, experiential, non-formal and informal.

Formalised Institutional Learning

Vonk (1995) reports on professional development occurring through formal types. This type of professional development constitutes planned and structured learning, directed to attainment of practical and theoretical knowledge, insights, attitudes and a teacher repertory for everyday classroom practice. The learning is bankable and occurs in formalised institutional settings. Thus, formal professional development includes instruction and coaching, theory, practice, assessment, and consistent supportive feedback if it has to effect change in classroom practice (Day & Sachs, 2004; Joyce & Showers, 1995). Thus through formal learning, socially and professionally mediated learning from knowledgeable 'others' e.g. lecturers, knowledgeable colleagues, etc. takes place. Such learning therefore arises out of and is enhanced by own efforts as well as from the efforts of others.

In another study of in-service teachers Graven (2004) concluded that professional development is best enabled by long-term, classroom-focused and practice-based, in-service programmes in which reflective practice, networking and discussions through

lectures and workshops are central. Such programmes would include weekly sessions, individual and group reflection sessions, individual and collaborative classroom practical engagements and written activities to accompany practical sessions e.g. lesson plans and reflections. Opportunities for teacher sharing of frustrations, experiences and teaching resources including networking were increased. Teacher talk dominated contact sessions, enhanced through collaborative work and discussions where these practicing teachers brought their experiences into discussions as resources for concretising discussions.

However, Lewin and Stuart (2003) acknowledge the value of immediate integration of theory and practice to enable the marriage of propositional and contextual and situated knowledge of given groups of learners. An amalgam of formal, non-formal and informal opportunities is more effective in generating professional development as it encompasses facets of personal, social and occupational professional development (Fraser, Kennedy, et al., 2007; Kennedy, 2005). Further, enabling ownership and control of the process may attend to more facets of the personal and social aspects of learning and consequently yield more teacher professional development (Bell & Gilbert, 1996b; Evans, 2002; Kennedy, 2005). The section has indicated that professional development experiences occur in formalised settings, the following section discusses professional development through the process of doing.

Learning through Experience

Classroom practice enables professional development through the process of doing the teaching. A Canadian study of full-time student teachers to determine the role of theory in learning to teach, confirmed that experience was effective in teaching one how to teach (Russell, 1988). Russell was quick to report that practice teaching experience is a significant component of any teacher education programme as it provides essential opportunities to perform the practice and receive immediate feedback from mentors and supervisors for immediate application. "... mathematics and chemistry can only give you ideas on how to teach, but not teach you how to teach" (Russell, 1988:23). Thus, the only way to learn how to teach is through the classroom in hands-on experience involving lesson delivery inclusive of the supporting processes. He therefore concluded that

experience and teaching practices shape the meaning, and the relationship between theory and practice make two alternate segments of a single activity.

McLaughlin (2008) describes professional development through classroom practice as 'teaching/learning for understanding'. The teacher begins to understand the underlying principles about pedagogy, content and learner learning from engaging in the practice. McLaughlin hastens to report that teaching for understanding relies on teachers' abilities to view complex subject matter against learner diversity and school/classroom context, and thus, the know-how essential to accomplish this vision of practice has to be through practice. She contends that teacher professionalism needs professional development opportunities transcending knowledge and skills acquisition to comprise occasions for lesson preparation and delivery, learner assessment and evaluation as well as self-evaluation and critical reflection and consequently, crafting new knowledge and beliefs about content, pedagogy and learner learning. 'Teachers' work' involves organizing systematic learning (Morrow, 2007).

Caires and Almeida (2005) in Portugal studied Teaching Practice (TP) in Initial Teacher Education and its impact on teachers' professional development focusing on experiences and perceptions during TP. Findings revealed that field experience presented occasions to engage in professional development practices relating to practical knowledge on preparation and organization of the teaching/learning process namely lesson delivery and assessment, critical reflection, as well as other aspects like time management, teaching strategies, classroom organization and pupil motivation. This enables teachers to probe their practices, beliefs, and institutional modes of practice.

Darling-Hammond and Ball (1997) report that teacher professional development transcends accumulating fact-based knowledge, and includes mastery of new conceptions of content and pedagogy and assumption of new practical roles as demanded by teaching/learning contexts and, collaborating in teaching/learning activities with knowledgeable colleagues. Lieberman (1993) alludes to professional development in a school that includes teaching, mentoring and research. Drawing on Lieberman, the mentor is located in a community of knowledgeable colleagues. Such collaboration therefore

enables the mentee to gain access to the mentor's craft knowledge where the mentor guides the mentee, articulating and presenting recipes, and the nuts and bolts that work. The mentee, like a child, is lead through phases of development being equipped with requisite pedagogical knowledge (Stephens, 1998). Such gains are enhanced by collaboration in clinical supervision, going through the stages: pre-observation, lesson demonstration/observation and the post-lesson conference (Kerry & Mayes, 1996).

Pre-observation involves engagement in thorough and careful lesson planning. During mentor lesson demonstration, the trainee observes something new in the familiar teaching/learning process and will think and act on what they see, and the post lesson conference enables feedback. The trainee benefits more from immediate discussion and feedback (Fish, 2004). To begin with, through modelling a lesson, the student teacher is encouraged to reflect on the mentor's action and, through feedback he/she receives guidance and support and subsequently develops. Modelling a lesson enables the mentor to lead by example. Further, the teacher benefits pedagogically through the pedagogic style adopted by the mentor (Chakanyuka, Mukeredzi et al., 2006). Another dimension of professional development emanates from mentor observation of the teacher's lessons that offer the teacher learning from their own practice.

In-service students studied by Caires and Almeida (2005) highlighted learner assessment and critical reflection as areas that enabled professional development. Because the goal of education is to enable students to construct their own meaning of specific content, the teacher provides learning activities that promote meaning making (Shulman 2004). Such success can only be measured through assessment and evaluation. Implied in this description is giving written work, projects, tests and examinations. The teacher assesses the written work, makes running comments indicating where errors or weaknesses occur, compiles mark profiles and rate the performance of students. Running comments according to Cohen, Manion et al., (2004) add to the knowledge of pupils on a specific topic or concept covered. Consequently, the process and experience of learner assessment leads to professional development.

Russell (1988) emphasizes supervision as critical for professional development in in-service learning. Bourdillon (1999) defines supervision simply as looking over the shoulder of the teacher trainee to stimulate and motivate as well as support and guide through feedback on personal, educational and professional development matters. In this sense, supervision may be seen as distinct from mentoring in as much as the activity may be conducted by the principal, deputy or Head of Department (HoD), who may not necessarily be appointed as mentor. This view sees experiential learning as enabling guidance and supervision through school-based clinical approaches that regard supervision as integral to the teachers' professional development. Supervision is therefore concerned directly with improvement of instruction and student learning outcomes by improvement of the teacher's methods and strategies (Kerry & Mayes, 1996). Further, as supervision enhances reflection on teaching, it is therefore critical for enabling teacher reflection in, upon and about their teaching practices in relation to learner needs and growth, and their own professional development (Kerry & Mayes, 1996).

School communities engage teachers in cross-role activities as counsellors and other learning and professional roles and responsibilities that stimulate a shared understanding of institutional goals and practices more effectively (Fullan, 1991; Lieberman & Mace, 2008b). Learner counselling and career guidance were seen as important by teachers studied by (Harley, Bertram et al., 1999). The same study however noted competency/role specialisation boundaries where effectiveness with which teachers assumed some laid down roles by policy was shaped by their understanding of those policies. From the discussion, it is therefore proposed that the process of teaching enhances teacher professional development experiences through: lesson delivery, assessment and evaluation as well as supervision and mentoring and, through practicing counselling. The following section discusses professional development through structures.

Learning Through Meetings and Workshops

Teacher professional development also occurs through planned, structured and typically mediated non-formal structures. In this discussion, such structures include both school and out of school (internal and external) meetings and workshops. The discussion on

professional development experiences through internal structures revolves around four dimensions: whole school staff meetings, specialisation meetings, staff and students' meetings and teacher-parents meetings. Out of school meetings offer professional development experiences through engagement with other structures external to the school.

In-school meetings

Fullan (1999) identified four effective factors for effective in-school professional development: the instructional leader's 'feel' for the professional development process; a shared value system; a high level of communication and interaction; and collaboration in decision making, planning and implementation. Fullan observes that absence of such factors, limit both individual and school professional development.

To begin with, school communities comprise inclusive up-close occasions for teacher professional development and rethinking modes of their practice (Little & McLaughlin, 1994). In the whole school staff meetings, interdepartmental interactions cut through disciplinary boundaries and foster interdepartmental interdependency and agency. Teachers focus on methods of enquiry and learning, think deeply about their students' learning and examine their work from a global whole school perspective (Little & McLaughlin, 1994). Such inclusive meetings also enable professional development through what is happening elsewhere in the greater activity system that fosters both collegial and individual professional development.

In their SA study exploring teacher roles in policy and practice, Harley, Bertram et al., (1999) noted that within individual schools only specialisation teachers met to discuss issues to do with their subject. This suggests an absence of interdepartmental interdependency and sharing through whole school staff gatherings. Such practices may propagate boundaries where partitions of knowledge and atomisation of teacher roles, responsibilities and specialisations are emphasized. However, whole school gatherings can only be facilitated by school leadership (Day, 1995). Day further points out that professional development should not be individualized as it is the responsibility of the school to improve educational opportunities for students. Holistic learner improvement can

only be achieved through aggregated professional development of individual teachers as part of that activity system. Thus, the school head, in setting the scene and creating appropriate conditions for professional development, is shaping the school culture, creating structures in which both teachers and learners learn and develop.

Second, subject specialisations organised around classroom practice and reflection, resemble “knowledge collectives” (Darling-Hammond, 1996) with collaborative responsibility for students’ as well as colleagues’ professional development (McLaughlin 2008). The specialist communities make regular time to establish norms of trust, planning, problem solving and, sharing as well as scaffolding their professionalism against their classroom practice and, reflection (Little & McLaughlin, 1994; Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994). On the contrary, McLaughlin in his study discovered that departmental meetings were rare and when they occurred only addressed “administrivia” (2008:10) and bureaucratic procedures. Teachers revealed that meetings were often cancelled, as there was nothing to discuss and often adopted 2-minute talks on the way out of the building.

Reflection provides an important means through which teachers can learn because it describes the attitude of the mind (Southworth & Campbell, 1992). From their study Southworth and Campbell discovered that specialization gatherings fostered professional development through engaging with colleagues, questioning and observing them, appraising their own and others’ practices overtly or covertly and general subject dialogues that promoted acquisition of new knowledge and skills. Such learning was active as teachers reflected on what they heard, saw and practiced. However, reflection alone, albeit necessary, is insufficient for professional development (Day, 1995). It is imperative that confrontation by self and others must occur. Day talks of double loop learning and development where teaching practices become explicit, public and accessible to others, thus learning becomes collaborative. Confrontation by ‘others’ comes into play with the instructional leader ensuring appropriate opportunities for this to happen.

Third, gatherings of the whole school staff and students also provide opportunities for professional development. Such collective activities are seen as fostering social cohesion

within the school community rather than activities that view teachers and other community members as separate entities. Southworth and Campbell (1992) note that school assembly fosters social cohesion and builds social capital as it inducts and socialises the teacher into institutional norms, practices and standards. They further note that many school contexts have long-established norms and practices with regard to curriculum and pedagogy to which all teachers are expected to conform. Accordingly, each school context has evolved ways where teachers are made aware of expectations and assembly is one of them. Thus, occasions that draw teachers together within the school promote professional development experiences. The next section discusses out of school meetings.

Out of school meetings

For this discussion, out of school meetings include school-to-school cluster and associations meetings, meetings with the DoE, and meetings of professional organisations and unions. A cluster is a group of schools that regularly converge, to provide mutual support and cooperative work towards own and others' professional development. From a Zimbabwean conceptualisation, a cluster is a group of schools within the same geographical location that gather to share ideas, resources, pedagogies and problems on how to improve quality and relevance of education in their respective institutions (Chikoko, 2006).

First, teacher-to-teacher and school-to-school networks provide critical friendships to examine and reflect on teaching, sharing experiences resources and efforts to improve practice (Prawat, 1992). Harley, Bertram et al., (1999) also note school-to-school interdependence through sharing of both material and psychological mediational tools and artefacts related to assessment and various other aspects of their teaching. Such networks demonstrate that help helps (Prawat, 1992) and make powerful tools through teacher engagement in collaborative work on authentic challenges. Teachers transcend the dynamics of their own school and classroom contexts and come across other possibilities inclusive of people experiencing and solving similar problems (Lieberman & McLaughlin, 1992). In essence they develop through one another's' experiences. Graven discovered that teachers in her study acclaimed school-to-school cluster meetings allowed for:

A lot of interaction, ample opportunity for discussion, ample opportunity to criticise, evaluate and disagree, not being dictated to and being treated like professionals (2004:8).

Contrary to the above, however, teachers in Graven's study criticized Department of Education organised workshops; "... where there was no interaction, only instruction given to us without even understanding what we are required to do on that document (the National Curriculum Statement)..." Thus, where close links develop with other schools and school personnel, there is mutual approach to mastery of classroom implications of new ideas on content and pedagogy. Thus teachers collaborate and expand on concepts and share insights and expertise, thereby enhancing professional development experiences (Lieberman & McLaughlin, 1992).

Second, emphasising out of school meetings, McLaughlin (2008) advises that just as individual teachers cannot learn alone, in-school learning communities require connections with structures external to the school. In a study on teacher learning McLaughlin notes that communities that are successful in fostering teacher professional, personal and social development, as well as positive change in classroom practice, are those with some manner of regular connection to the outside. She notes that outsiders are critical in fostering and sustaining creative dis-equilibrium. Those school contexts lacking outside reality check, give critical feedback and coaching, can move from shared learning to shared illusions concerning the school's effectiveness (McLaughlin, 2008). McLaughlin hastens to point out that important and powerful opportunities for teacher professional development have been realised outside their schools contexts. To this he adds that teachers' professional development benefits in many powerful ways from new arrangements made with professional bodies and organisations.

Third, Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) report that teacher professional development comes from membership in professional associations and communities that cut through classrooms and school campuses. Engaging in professional development experiences outside the school settings enables teachers to 'break set' and experience things differently (McLaughlin, 2008). Such school communities transcend institutional

and geographical boundaries, converging together teachers from diverse backgrounds, experiences and knowledge who have something in common. Thus through the community, knowledge is expanded and exchanged and the process in turn expands individual professional, personal and social capabilities (Maistry, 2005) of members. For Graven (2004) organised specialisation professional association meetings and conferences where teachers work collaboratively, making inputs into various curriculum and teaching documents, listening to and engaging in related paper presentations and sharing curriculum challenges, are effective in professional development. Such participation in broader professional networks is a vital way of sustaining teacher professional development and participation within the subject field in the wider context.

Fourth, McLaughlin (2008) reports on collaborations with the private sector as enabling acquisition of new subject expertise as well as experience with their students' future workplaces. The teacher's skill and knowledge as well as insights in channelling learners are increased. Such collaborations he notes provide teachers critical information about what the workplace will demand of their students and leading edge knowledge and skills related to their subjects. Further, new knowledge about teaching and learning are created through such collaborations that link theory and practice, and may result in more practical contextualised theory and more theoretically based but largely informed by practice (McLaughlin, 2008; Prawat, 1992).

Fifth, teacher unions have been recorded as enabling teacher learning through diverse forms of teacher engagements. According to the Association of American Educators (AAE) education unions advance the teaching profession through teacher professional development, teacher advocacy and protection, as well as promotion of educational excellence to enhance teacher recognition, respect and rewards (American Association of Educators, 2009). From a Zimbabwean perspective, teacher unions as membership driven organisations seek to articulate, provide for and protect professional, economical, social and emotional needs of teachers through workshops and meetings and other forms of information publication, distribution and sharing (Zimbabwe, 2006). The SADTU defines their overarching goal as to fight for better remuneration and working conditions for

educators, represent and promote their professional aspirations as well as assume a leading role in education transformation through constant member conscientisation and education in workshops (SA Democratic Teachers' Union, 2009) .

The discussion above indicates that out of school structures that draw teachers together provide avenues for professional development experiences. The next section covers professional development experiences through interaction.

Learning through Interaction

Lieberman (1993), Little (1993), Guskey (2002), and Day and Sachs (2004) allude to the notion of professional development through networking. For purposes of this discussion, informal professional development occurs through networking with various community dimensions within and outside the school. To begin with, the above scholars view it as encompassing wide ranging formal and informal activities that interact with diverse teacher aspects, contexts and change processes in relation to student learning throughout their professional lives. Hargreaves (2001) further regards it as dealing with short-term and long-term teacher professional, social and personal development. Implied is the acquisition of knowledge and skills for trial and error, developing new meanings and practices. It also enables self-evaluation of personally and socially constructed beliefs and ideas of teaching/learning process (Lieberman, 2000).

From a study of Student Teachers' Understanding of Teaching Taylor (2004) reports that their understandings of teaching were facilitated through informal interactions. To this Southworth and Campbell (1992) from studying teachers on an in-service programme reported that professional development opportunities arose when teachers had incidental chances to see or hear about, and reflect upon colleagues' practice. Though unplanned, these informal/incidental encounters enable gaining knowledge of the school that transcends their own classroom walls. Some such occasions arise naturally through teacher collective engagements (Southworth & Campbell, 1992).

Further, for Little (1993) social networks offer social and emotional engagement within and outside their immediate community. This conception views an amalgam of formal experiential and non-formal learning as inadequate for professional development. This view further acknowledges limited access to psychological mediational tools within the school community. Thus engagement with ideas, materials and practices with specialisation and other experts, provides mechanisms for professional development support and consultation. Little's ideas resonate with discoveries by Southworth and Campbell (1992) where incidental opportunities for mutual learning enable sharing ideas, offering suggestions and contributing to colleagues' work, but simultaneously picking up relevant ideas for their own personal growth, professional development and classroom practice. Continuous listening and interaction according to Southworth and Campbell enabled learning both from colleagues as well as from their own experiences. This increased their knowledge and skills making them deeply rooted in classroom practice and personal and professional growth.

To this, Day (1995) also emphasises informal interactions as critical for professional development through lightening energy and time loads for observation; checking against bias in self-reporting and self evaluation; enabling comparison with classroom practices elsewhere; and, acting as a resource for others while drawing on others. Thus to Day, networks, collaborations and partnerships enable locating new ideas in relation to individual professional development, and institutional development, histories, practices and circumstances. While informal learning offers some contribution to professional development experiences, it is a natural occurrence that may not be recognised even by individuals themselves as contributing to their knowledge and skills.

Given the foregoing discussion and for my purposes in this study, professional development is conceived as encompassing all the interactive on-going activities directed towards developing and/or upholding a teacher's knowledge and skills and occurring in multiple realms to enhance the teacher's effectiveness in classroom practice.

This section has provided literature related to the concepts: profession and professional development as well as professional development in the different realms. The next section

examines rurality as a critical component of the system under exploration: the particular challenges in those settings and the professional development needs of those teachers.

Rurality

A literature search on rural education has yielded very limited relevant research. Abd-Kadir and Hardman (2007) made similar observations pointing out that there is paucity of data into how rural teachers actually teach in the classroom, suggesting a need for description and interpretation of classroom practices particularly discourse strategies of learning and teaching. The limited academic work available has focused on rural teacher challenges, teacher support and teacher needs. Thus, existing literature has apparently failed to address a critical aspect of my study to do with teacher classroom practices, thereby creating a gap. This study will attempt to partially address this gap. The first section attempts to unpack the concept rural and this is followed by attempts to define rural education and rural schools. The second section discusses the challenges faced by rural schools. The last section discusses rural teacher support and teacher needs.

The Concept ‘Rural’

To understand rural education or rural schools, it is critical to define the concept rural. Coming up with such a definition clearly and objectively has apparently been a conceptual problem for some time. Rios (1988) Abd-Kadir and Hardman (2007) point to the elusiveness of the definition of rural due to ambiguity of the term and arbitrary nature of the distinctions with urban. One way of defining rural is the way Whitaker (1999) does in relation to USA where he defines a county as one that is below a minimum threshold of 8000 inhabitants. One could apply that kind of model to the SA situation and say districts where there are less than a certain density of the population could be understood as rural. Qualitatively, rural has been defined as any area that is not defined as urban, an antonym of urban. It is thus understood by determining what it is not, hence, rural is not urban or metropolitan but is characterized by simple life, agriculture, smallness, homogeneity and dullness.

Rural is increasingly defined through examining numerous broad categories of information. Deavers and David (1985) developed seven categories of rural areas based on economic, social and demographic information. Economic categories include agriculture, manufacturing, mining, proportion of land under government ownership and persistent poverty, growth of retirement population, and low education levels relate to social and demographic information. The HSRC SA and the Department of Education (SA, 2005) provide a working definition by identifying Traditional Authority (TA) land (mainly composed of community owned locations) and commercial farms in former white areas of SA, as rural. In a cautionary note, the DoE hastens to point out that there is a lot of diversity in SA rural areas, hence factors of social, economic, educational and cultural nature need to be taken into account to enhance the definition. Their view of rural bears some characteristic features inclusive of distance from a town, topography, access to communication and information technology, transport infrastructure, accessibility of services and facilities, the health, educational and economic status of the community, undeveloped mode of production, access to life-long learning opportunities, social conditions in the community and activities of political and civil society organizations (HSRC SA, 2005). Thus, due to great diversity in rural classification approaches based on specific policy applications, most governments define rural based on population criteria, as those areas not classified as urban or metropolitan.

What is Rural Education?

In the absence of a single definition of 'rural' it follows that there is no clear definition for 'rural education.' Carmichael (1995) however defines rural education as "that education provided to the school-age children residing in rural areas," but then hastens to point out that there is some confusion over the term "rural" (p. 21). Dunne (1981) affirms that rural education exists, but cautions that it is neither in large rural schools nor even in all small schools. Real rural education, she contends, is defined by these characteristically rural strengths:

A lack of distinction between what belongs in school and what belongs in the community; a kind of generalism which expects people to do whatever they are able without filling specialized roles or performing strictly age-graded functions; close and supportive ties between families and schools; a sense of comfort and cooperative spirit among school children and teachers; rural interdependence translated into the school setting (p. 4).

What is a Rural School?

Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) (2005) that rural schools are isolated learning centres that are prevalent in non-urban communities. Helge (1983) developed a 3-dimensional approach to categorizing rural school settings that includes elements of topography, population density and community variables inclusive of district administrative structures, diverse ethnic groups, religious practices, community communication and interdependence, and collaboration with other agencies.

Highlighting efforts to define rurality and rural settings is not an empty exercise as rural schools enrol more than 10 million learners in America and a significant figure of 60 - 70% of all school-going children the world over (FAO, 2005). Given the varied conceptions of the concept rural, for purposes of this study, rural is understood as referring to any area that is not defined as urban, being sparsely populated open country, generally in an agricultural context with forest and often desert environments. The definition includes areas under traditional governance systems such as the chiefs (Ishe / Nkosi). Rurality is therefore marked by poor topography (conditions of roads, bridges, etc.) and other physical infrastructure (roads, buses, taxes), inadequate provision of communication facilities, limited service provision in terms of electricity, water and sanitation, limited or even absence of opportunities for life-long learning and recreational facilities, inadequate provision of health care, educational and economic opportunities and, minimal political and civil activity (Morrissey, 1987; Rios, 1988; Taylor & Mulhall, 2006). Schools located in such environments are often characteristically under resourced and it is such schools that are the focus of this study.

Wedekind (2005) notes that a number of policies in South Africa including the Land Act, the Group Areas' Act of 1953 and the Separate Development Act, all contributed to the development of Bantustans and a highly segmented rural landscape. The former white rural

farming areas are distinct; with sparse population, communication facilities, modern roads, as well as road and rail networks that ensure accessible transport. On the other hand, the rural areas in former Bantustans have poor infrastructure and considerably dense, formal and informal homesteads or village-style settlements (Wedekind, 2005).

Rural areas in Zimbabwe constitute three categories; the former sparsely populated white farming areas, with characteristic appropriately well developed infrastructure, close to towns and cities, across watershed with rich agricultural farmlands (Mlahleki, 1995). Further away from the towns and cities, are sparsely populated, black owned small-scale market farming areas on infertile soils and with limited infrastructural provision. At their 'hems' are the traditional rural, communal lands located hundreds of kilometres away from towns and former white farms. These are characterized by densely populated villages on one side, large tracts of infertile land for peasant farming on the other side, and portions of grazing land further away from the homes. A characteristic feature in such areas is the absence of infrastructure.

Rural education in most countries, Zimbabwe and South Africa alike, lags behind educational development in all other parts of the country. This is despite the fact that the majority of school-going age children live in rural areas. In Zimbabwe 80% of school going pupils are in rural settings with the schools located at least 30km away from a town (Peresu, Nhundu et al., 1999). In KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa, 52% of the schools are at least 10km away from a town, 11% fall between 50km and 99km, and only 1% is over 100km away from a town (Wedekind, 2005). Given the above statistics, it becomes critical to have a clearer understanding of the nature of challenges and needs in these schools.

Challenges Faced by Rural Schools and Teachers

Although challenges are not really answering any of my critical questions, the information is intended to provide specific insight into rural school obstacles to inform our understanding of the rural school phenomena. FAO (2005) maintains that essential problems and issues in rural education are the same the world over, except that some are more extreme and more intractable than others due to greater poverty, isolation and

powerlessness. Challenges that confront rural schools are mainly to do with under resourcing. The following section discusses rural school challenges as they relate to limitations in resources, government attention and education delivery, demand and supply factors and, teacher deployment.

First of all, governments fail to set educational systems on equal courses in all parts of the country to prepare young people for life wherever they would choose to live it (Nhundu & Makoni, 1999). Schools therefore struggle to implement government policies and in their efforts often always fall short of expectations due to lack of resource, skills and experience implicitly assumed by national policy (HSRC, 2005; Mulkeen, 2006; Tabach & Friedlander, 1997). Attention needs to be given to these schools which represent large proportions of learning populations in Sub-Saharan Africa (Barker & Hall, 1993; Monk, 1997). In addition, adult voices in research reports (HSRC, 2005) point to the need for equal education and skills that promote community, rural and social development, and learners' call for, socially just, meaningful education that opens doors to the wider world. While teachers strive to meet these demands, their efforts are stymied by inadequate resource provision. Tabach and Friedlander (1997) posit that:

Teaching aids and materials, particularly those that relate to local context, are often in short supply. Small classrooms with large numbers of learners make practical teaching and evaluation of learning difficult. Physical constraints in the classrooms and an absence of regular professional support lead to low motivation levels among rural teachers and learners (p.39).

Confirming the issue of limited resources in rural schools HSRC (2005) quotes the South African Ministerial Committee on Rural Education (1999) as confirming challenges facing teachers in rural schools. They note shortages of human and material resources and access to professional development programmes. Thus teachers' classroom activities are often limited by inadequate resources. Pillay and Govinden (2007) however, from their South African study of the practices of the self in selected teacher narratives concluded that teachers creatively resist constraints of 'the school' to reconfigure what it means to be a 'teacher'.

Second, in terms of attention, while most governments have in place attractive rural development policies, not much reference is made to education albeit assuming

responsibility for and control of education and training provision in rural communities (HSRC, 2005) and, where reference is made, implementation of the policies is often found wanting. The HSRC discovered that rural children's constitutional right to education was not realised and their rights within and through education were limited. At the World Conference on Education for All, UNESCO (2004) declared, "...every person – child, youth and adult shall benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs." Basic learning needs in this context encompass essential learning tools (literacy, oral expression, numeracy, problem solving) and learning content (knowledge, skills, values, attitudes) critical for survival and maximizing fully potentials for a dignified life (Taylor & Mulhall, 2006). The declaration was in response to international concern over the deterioration of education systems particularly for rural poor contexts. This was against a backdrop that formal basic education beyond the family is a vital, national developmental component.

Education – especially basic, helps to reduce poverty by increasing the productivity of the poor and improving health, and by equipping people with the skills they need to participate fully in the economy and in society (World Bank 1995: 131).

Rural education has been viewed as a low priority area globally, because urban people are more vocal and organized they succeed in drawing all the attention and monopolizing government focus at the expense of rural dwellers and thus universal policy document frameworks lack sensitivity to the specific needs of rural poor communities (Peresu, Nhundu et al., 1999; HSRC, 2005). Given that educational opportunities for rural adults and youth are non-existent, literacy levels for adults and educational attainment for children are amongst the lowest and the imminent future for the majority of the youth is unemployment (HSRC, 2005).

Education delivery in rural areas has been limited in many respects. While government spending on education in most countries has apparently improved, this is often not reflected in learning and educational performance. Most education stakeholders in rural areas attach great value to education and the benefits that they envisage it can bring. However, HSRC (2005) discovered that rural education is far from realizing these expectations even to a moderate extent. The majority of rural learners do not see adequate

hope in education and they regard it not as a ladder out of poverty, but confirmation of their status in life. Education can only offer hope and possibilities when poverty conditions are addressed alongside education through access provided for good quality, equitable, well managed, and democratically organized EFA and where; rural development policies that give priority to educational strategies encompassing special needs of the rural poor are enacted (Mulkeen, 2006).

Third, with regard to demand and supply, many factors give rise to low participation in education in rural schools. On the demand side many rural schools note limited interest in school attendance mainly due to the fact that rural households depend on their older children for a hand in peak agricultural time, which is always not aligned to school schedules and curricula (FAO, 2005; UNESCO, 2006). Such mismatch creates multiple tensions between parents and learners, parents and teachers, and teachers and learners (Tabach & Friedlander, 1997). This consequently impacts on professional development practices, as reciprocal relations with parents are effective in enhancing classroom management and control.

Low education levels of parents and alien schools curricula may give rise to lower value being attached to schooling (Lewin, 2000; Mulkeen, 2006; Tabach & Friedlander, 1997; P. Taylor & Mulhall, 2001). Thus, the perceived irrelevance of schooling may be attributed to rigid curricula often designed for different contexts and therefore neither corresponding to the needs, interests and problems of rural learners nor relevant enough to enable linking scientific concepts, literacy and numeracy skills with life experiences of these learners (Tabach & Friedlander, 1997). It is the “curricula activities, which make the most of the immediate environment which seems particularly valuable to them” (Tabach and Friedlander, 1997:66). Absence of such linkages, make learning topics difficult for learners and this impacts on teaching/learning processes and teacher professional development.

The home environments are often not supportive of children’s learning, often lacking appropriate facilities such as electricity. Literacy levels of parents limit ability to provide support and some parents report embarrassment to discuss school topics with their children due to ignorance (Taylor & Mulhall, 2001; World Bank, 2005). Other contexts report

barriers between communities and schools where schools operate in isolation of their communities. As clearly indicated by Harley, Bertram et al.

Teachers expressed disappointment that not many parents were interested in what goes on in the school. They only come to school as a reactionary measure such as when a child does not take home a school report. Teachers argued that parental apathy or indifference is due to the fact that most of them are not educated about their role and rights in the education of their children (1999:185).

Bhengu makes a related remark: "...the reality is that many parents do not set foot on the school premises" (2007:132) due to lack of consultation on numerous issues affecting their children's education. In other countries, for example Cyprus, schools maintain conservative relationships with parents to protect their professional autonomy (Anaxagorou, 2007). Similarly, France and Germany do not maintain a prominent partnership culture with parents. Thus, teachers keep a professional distance with parents and view them just as 'suppliers' of pupils, only joining hands with them when it benefits the school. To this Gwati and Chasokela (1996) foreground centrality of harmonious, dignified and healthy relationships with the community through structured joint participation in projects. Liaison with parents and networking acknowledges them as complementary educators, which enhances teacher personal and professional development and promotes school image and standing within that community.

Fourth, with regard to deployment which represents the supply side, governments often fail to supply adequate education services in rural areas. Mulkeen (2006) and Hedges (1998) based on separate studies in West Africa conclude that competent, qualified and experienced teachers shun postings in rural contexts. Acedo (2002) also points to serious challenges in deployment of competent qualified teachers to rural schools in many countries globally. As further confirmed:

Problems associated with personnel postings may be at their worst in schools located in rural areas... report continued difficulty recruiting teachers for rural positions ... teachers shun rural schools because of geographical isolation, socio-economic conditions and cultural differences (Ludlow, 1998:62).

Also quoting one teacher from his study Hedges (1998) notes:

Profound fear among new teachers spending too much time in an isolated village without access to further education, you become 'a village man,' a term which strongly conveys the ignorance of rural dwellers in the eyes of some urban educated Ghanaians (p.364).

Other reasons for this may be explained by HSRC (2005) who note that teachers view rural areas as having limited opportunities for professional development given the easier access to further education in urban areas. In addition, many teachers commute long distances to school, often starting late and leaving early. Given the inadequate internal and external supervision in these isolated schools, there is progressive and gradual erosion of the school year and this has a bearing on professional development and classroom delivery (Mulkeen, 2006).

Given the above discussion, four issues seem to stand out clearly: limited government support, severe under resourcing, limited parents' support, and deployment challenges. The issue is to ensure that teachers reach schools where there is most need and provide them with adequate training and professional development 'in situ', giving them resources and other forms of support (Acedo, 2002; Mulkeen, 2006).

Needs of Rural School Teachers

Teachers have a whole range of needs in any particular context and generally these seem to revolve around issues of support, class management, pedagogy and curriculum. In terms of professional development, Monk (1997) and Acedo (2002) concur and isolate professional development needs of teachers in rural schools as related to support in terms of supervision, methods of teaching, curriculum, resources and parent/teacher relations. In this discussion, the first section describes those needs in relation to unqualified practicing teachers in rural schools. The second part discusses needs of unqualified practicing teachers that are not necessarily specific to rural settings but become exacerbated in those contexts.

In relation to supervisory support from the ministry of education, Mulkeen (2006) notes limitations in terms of quality and frequency of supervision in rural schools. Hedges (1998)

also notes that DoE inspection and supervision have often become rituals involving only inspection of documentation. Quoting one of his participants:

Sometimes teachers will prepare lesson notes but they will not intend to teach them. Some teachers in our staff yes, he will prepare and he has a big bundle of notes and he just transfers the notes. So in this way supervisors are stressing on the lesson notes, the teachers will take advantage, prepare the lesson notes and not teach and go away (p. 360).

Further arguing for support by DoE, Mulkeen notes "... quality of education management by education departments in rural schools is diminished by poor management and support" (2006:28). Teacher support and management in remote places presents challenges for DoE. It is the physical remoteness of these schools that often makes it difficult to reach them. Thus, the chain of support from school inspectors through parents' community to school management is critical for effective pedagogic delivery and professional development of unqualified practicing teachers. The focus of inspection visits should be to team teach, offer help and advice, absence of effective inspections often leads to inefficiency in and neglect of the core teaching duties.

Acedo (2002) regards meeting regularly, building confidence in content and methods as effective in in-servicing professionally under-qualified teachers in rural settings. This as it may, contrarily Devlin-Scherer (2003) report that teachers who participate in cluster groups change their daily instructional practices to a greater degree than do teachers relying on supervisory feedback. A counter argument by Hargreaves, Comber et al. (1996) from a study on recruitment, retraining and retention of rural teachers indicates that they need supportive supervision and better teaching and learning resources, which they regard as important for job satisfaction, retention and ongoing professional development.

With regard to teaching approaches, in a Namibian study O'Sullivan (2004) explored the usefulness of Lesson Observation in a Primary Teachers' In-Service Education and Training (INSET) Programme for 145 unqualified practicing teachers in rural areas. O'Sullivan's findings indicate that unqualified practicing teachers in rural schools need support and guidance on learner-centred approaches, basic teaching skills, e.g. questioning,

lesson preparation, class management and content selection. Further, unqualified teachers in rural schools were found to be in need of knowledge of integrating strategies and content. Thus, they needed knowledge of the amalgam of content and pedagogy (PCK) vital for matching chosen strategies with the given content (Al-Haj, 1999; Lliyan, 2000; Shulman, 2004). They also needed knowledge and skills to develop an ability to adjust instructional materials to be in tandem with given learner levels and effective methods and strategies in diversity (Chuckbuck, Clift et al., 2001; Putz, 1992). In other words these teachers needed knowledge and skills to answer the what, how and when questions.

Concomitant to this Monk (1997) indicates pedagogical needs of unqualified and newly qualified teachers in rural settings as related to sequencing of both content and methods of teaching in terms of organizing and sequencing topics and lesson stages to enable coherent and connected presentation of ideas. Further explaining deficiencies in unqualified teachers posted to rural schools with regard to teaching strategies, Tabach and Friedlander (1997:68) point out "... teachers are unable to comprehend the irrelevance of their methods, styles and content as main causes of failure and non-participation of students, etc." In such a situation, learner classroom problems and their intellectual progress are blamed on home background even when the teacher is at fault (Monk, 1997). Skill in handling heterogeneous classes including handling diverse learner behaviours, backgrounds and learning capabilities are additional needs of beginning and unqualified rural teachers. In the absence of such skills and knowledge, professional development experiences are minimised (Monk, 1997).

Discussing curriculum, Ekanayake (1990) points out that many teachers, due to inadequate knowledge in pedagogy and curriculum interpretation and adaptation to appropriate levels for rural learners are unaware of the poor quality and nature of their teaching/learning support. In the circumstances, teachers may start, not, with the known or experienced, but with the unknown or un-experienced. To this, Monk (1997) adds that unqualified rural schoolteachers need education, information and relevant, supportive resources, reciprocal parents-teacher relations and, continuous guidance and monitoring on the curriculum to keep them on course. From a study in Cyprus study Anaxagorou (2007) concludes that

while teachers in rural areas often maintain a conservative stance to close relations with parents, these teachers need school-community cooperation which they view as important for their professional development. Zehava and Salman (2008) note that both unqualified and beginning teachers need parental support in whose absence classroom discipline suffers. However, these teachers in Zehava and Salman's study also confirmed problems coping with parental pressure where children's grades were low, putting pressure on them to change grades, belittling and threatening to report them as incompetent. Friedman (2008) adds that parents support their children under any circumstances, rarely taking the teacher's position and often arguing with them.

This section has indicated that unqualified, practicing teachers in rural schools need support in terms of supervision, teaching strategies, curriculum and reciprocal relations with parents. The following section discusses other needs of unqualified practicing teachers that may not be limited to those unqualified teachers in rural schools but, become intensified in those settings. Such needs relate to collegial and supervisory support, classroom management and discipline.

First, novice and unqualified teachers alike often exhibit needs relating to expectations of emotional support from colleagues and school management and from a feeling of isolation and loneliness (Chuckbuck, Clift et al., 2001; Zehava & Salman, 2008). Such teachers expect support, guidance and open communication from school management, whom they view as the most significant in the school, having most solutions to problems and answers to questions. In their separate studies Friedman (2005) and Kelchtemans and Ballet (2002) note student teacher concern of their in-school professional and social status. Recognition, expectations and respect of the entire staff and management emerge as critical to effective classroom delivery, well-being and professional development. Other studies on unqualified teachers (Bullough, 1991; Friedman, 2005) point to the need for reciprocal relations with colleagues as well as interdependence in the use of resources. Unqualified teachers from these studies expected colleagues to proffer constructive criticism, inspire them and show commitment in particular at the start of their formal school experience.

Second, Southworth and Campbell (1992) in their study discovered that in both comfortable/satisfying and, uncomfortable/frustrating teaching/learning school contexts, collegial support was indispensable. When such support was available, the unqualified teachers felt encouraged to take risks and engage in those activities they would perhaps not do before, fully aware that success or failure which followed would be shared with colleagues. Implied here is that collective learning and, sharing of results from such ventures was informal. Southworth and Campbell (1992) hasten to point out that such security only occurs when individual teachers admit to a need to learn, be supported in their learning, and being prepared to learn from one another. Hence, the more teachers view learning as the norm for their professional life and development, and the more secure individuals feel within the group, the more confident they are to take advantage of all learning opportunities and share learning with colleagues.

Third, in relation to supervision, from the USAID (2006) study of Namibian teachers on an in-service teacher education programme, teachers overwhelmingly identified supervisory support, both internal and external, as the most needed form of support. They explained that supervisory support achieved through regular school-based supervisions would enhance their professional development and turn them out as competent teachers. Also highlighted as vital was the need for peer collaboration, school-based workshops as well as community involvement in the school. These findings resonate with earlier findings (Putz, 1992; Vonk, 1995) where unqualified practicing teachers indicated the need for administrative and supervisory support and, a pleasant school climate which were seen as essential for professional development, effective teaching and job retention.

In South Africa, Reddy (2003) studied Initial Training for Permanent Unqualified Teachers through Distance Education Programmes. Reddy's findings revealed that student teachers felt confident that they were receiving support and learning more from qualified teachers than from the university. Reddy (2003b) made similar observations based on a case study of a conventional Pre-Service Programme where student teachers rated very highly the professional development support from qualified school-based teachers during school experience and regarded it as more valuable than visits and discussions by lecturers. This

was because mentor discussions were based on realities of the majority of classrooms. Reddy's findings confirm earlier discoveries by Field (1994) from an Australian study of student teachers that placed great value on pre-and post-lesson conferences with mentors and knowledgeable colleagues.

Kettle and Sellers (2003a) in their study discovered mentors and colleagues as having a significant influence on building student teachers' orientations, dispositions, conceptions and classroom practices. This implied a need for pedagogical support from mentors through collaborative dialogue focusing on their images of teaching and reconstruction of those images as inconsistencies and contradictions surface. In the absence of an enabling, supportive and encouraging environment for exploring the dilemmas and contradictions, the student teachers may abandon such searches rather than face risks. Thus, according to them, professional development requires supportive opportunities for open discussion of personal histories and understandings of teaching. Lack of cooperation and support from experienced teachers is noted by Zehava and Salman "... the other teachers were not willing to cooperate with us, they treated us without respect, belittling us ... (2008:16). Unqualified teachers are thus often daunted with stress from feelings of vulnerability and isolation and, conflicts between personal and professional needs and this likely minimizes professional development (Talvitie, Peltokallio et al., 2000).

Fourth, with regard to disciplining scholars (Eilam, 2002; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Vonk, 1995) have noted that disciplinary problems are the most serious challenges for the teacher, and a lack of knowledge and skills in classroom management and discipline control in new and unqualified teachers alike. When they possess such knowledge, they are unable to apply it in their practice but resort to practices they experienced as learners, and adopt classroom management techniques that are contrary to what they may be learning at university (Eilam, 2002; Herbert & Worthy, 2001; Vonk, 1995). They need skill in creating conducive learning climates that do not pressure them, and learners that do not disturb with unnecessary chatter and noise (Kagan, 1992; Zehava & Salman, 2008). Lliyan (2000) adds that unqualified practicing teachers need knowledge and skill for group work. Lliyan further notes that grouping learners presented problems as learners paid little

attention to the teacher's explanations of the procedure and did not view group tasks seriously, instead they capitalized on that time for enjoyment and playing games.

From this discussion, the general needs of professionally unqualified practicing teachers revolve around collegial support and recognition, supervision and classroom management and control. The next section discusses conceptions of professionally unqualified practicing teachers in rural schools.

Teachers' Conceptions of Professional Development Experiences

Literature discussion on rural teacher challenges and needs indicates that underlying professional development in rural settings are relational dimensions and interdependence. Given the resource limitations and near isolation in some of these rural contexts, interpersonal and personal agency coupled with life-long learning therefore become critical for classroom practices and professional development. The recurrent challenges that rural teachers meet as well as ways to address those challenges and, their needs for professional development in those rural contexts constitute what they conceive as underpinning their professional development in a rural school. Such issues like support in relation to supervision, pedagogy, parents-teacher reciprocal relations, etc. constitute some aspects that underpin their professional development experiences. However, due to space limitations and also to avoid repetition, they will not be discussed again in this section, only interdependence will be discussed. While the discussion below may appear unspecific to rural school settings, such aspects are more critical in these settings given isolation and other numerous challenges in rural schools.

Interdependence in this discussion includes interpersonal and personal agency. Good relations, interdependence and cooperation with an emphasis on the school as a community are viewed by Day (1998) as replacing school independence and isolation. The interdependence and personal agency within school contexts can be better summarized by the words of Southworth and Campbell:

Part of a happy sharing, communicating staff, you are automatically learning at all levels at all times. You are learning about and from people. You can be learning about subject matter. You are learning how you can help and you then actively, through your enthusiasm, want to go away and apply it (1992:139).

Thus, interpersonal agency operates at diverse levels and locations and enables powerful and critical opportunities for teacher professional development (McLaughlin, 2008). Such interdependence enhances teacher growth and consequently classroom practice and improved learner achievement.

The success of interdependence is underpinned by effectiveness of personal agency. Personal agency is to do with one's capability to design and direct actions to achieve certain given goals (Zimmerman & Cleary, 2006). However, in as much as it relates to choices and instructional decisions and priorities, personal agency is also shaped by contextual and self-efficacy factors, i.e. the personal agency beliefs. These beliefs constitute a person's perception of whether or not they possess the requisite skills and competence to function effectively (capability beliefs) and an appropriate supportive environment for effective performance. Personal agency therefore becomes effective depending on an individual's capability and context beliefs, which implies that personal agency, is underpinned by capability and context.

The discussion has revealed that relational dimensions and interdependence drive professional development experiences in rural schools.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to review literature on PUPTs' professional development experiences in rural schools. The chapter has examined the concepts profession and professional development. The term rural has been unpacked and used to understand rural teacher challenges, needs and conceptions of professional development. Overall, literature surveyed suggests that rural teacher professional development occurs mainly through interaction in formal learning, experiential learning, non-formal and informal learning. Literature, further suggests that professional development experiences are often effective in internally and externally collaborative, supportive and well resourced contexts. The thesis of this study is that such support and encouragement is minimal, if not absent in many

school contexts. In addition, most stakeholders need to develop willingness to collaborate and engage in double loop learning which enhances collective professional development. In the present study, such collaboration may not be apparent in many school settings. Further, literature points to rural teacher needs related support in terms of supervision, pedagogy, resources, curriculum and class management and control. Literature also suggests that teachers in rural schools conceive their professional development as driven by relational dimensions and personal agency.

The next chapter discusses the theoretical framework that framed this study.

Chapter 4

Theoretical Framework

Introduction

In setting the scene in Chapter 1, I argued that professional development experiences of the PUPs in rural schools are under-researched. From a case study of two distinct international sites, this enquiry aimed at exploring PUPs' professional development experiences in rural secondary schools. Specifically, the study wanted to understand how these teachers engage in professional development practices at rural secondary school level. Having discussed the whole issue of professional development in rural schools in the literature, arising out of that, I needed a tool to help me to unpack and understand my data. Such a tool would enable analysing types of interaction as professional development occurs in a social space. I needed a tool that would help unpack some of the relational dimensions and power relations between and within people in a professional development environment and a tool that offers a language of description of those interactions in different domains of formality and experience. The analytical tool for the language of description would enable complex descriptions of the interaction between knowledge and experiences.

Through engagement with my theoretical work, I found that Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) provides a useful set of tools for carrying my work forward. This chapter therefore explores the CHAT as the theoretical frame that guided the enquiry and informed data collection and analysis. The discussion begins by elaborating on Vygotsky's conceptions as underpinning CHAT, covering issues related to the historico-sociological concept, human interaction, consciousness, mediation, and the dualist separation of theory and practice. This is followed by an explanation of elements of CHAT namely: subject, object, outcome, mediating tools and artefacts, community, rules and division of labour, and an illustration of how the elements in the framework provide an analytical tool for this study. Focus is also given to contradictions as dynamic forces for change and development.

The CHAT Theoretical Framework

CHAT emerges out of constructivism and is viewed as having been founded on the ideas of Vygotsky in the 1920s and 1930s because of his orientation towards activity (Sawchuk, Durate et al., 2006). Although, Vygotsky lacked an elaborate theory of activity, he had a historico-sociological concept of activity (Edwards, 2005). Vygotsky's views of psychic development that occurred in interaction and collaboration, in socially developmental occasions as movement from inter-psychic to intra-psychic; his notions of cultural mediation, the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and transition to zones of actual performance (ZAP), in cooperation, support or modelling would be impossible in the absence of an historico-sociological concept of human activity (Davydov, 1993). Davydov saw Vygotsky's contribution as: "... focused on orientation toward joint work, mediated by means, as the key for analysis of the psyche i.e. mediation of psychic processes by signs and meanings ..." (1993:501). Thus, given the situated nature of professional development, this historico-sociological conception where psychic development occurs in interaction, cooperation, support and mediation and, viewed as movement from inter-psychic to intra-psychic locates my study within the CHAT framework.

Vygotsky conceived socialization as a process whereby humans internalise through engagement in common activities using cultural means: language, theories, technical artifacts as well as norms and modes of acting (Miettinen, 2006). Speech in the context of this study represents some form of human action mediated by tools and signs i.e. resources that may empower, enable or transform the action and interaction. From this understanding language is a special means; a tool of tools that enables thought, reflection, foresight and recollection (Sawchuk, Durate et al., 2006). Vygotsky named this cultural history emphasizing that one's activity is produced by historical development of their culture (Miettinen, 2006). Hence, Vygotsky's work was culturally situated. He was concerned with ways in which people can change themselves and their conditions of existence through their own social activities and agency (Wertsch, 1995). In the context of this study, the PUPTs can develop professionally through creating and re-creating appropriate conditions of their practice, i.e. engaging in social activity. Through this process, they will not only accommodate themselves within their practice, but will actively and continuously modify

it. In the process, activity i.e. teaching is the essential and definite form of relationship between these teachers and their world (Shotter, 1993).

Vygotsky was interested in consciousness, which he regarded as collective rather than individual (Billet, 2008; Elhammoumi, 2006). In this view, consciousness or awareness does not exist situated in a person's head, but is in the interaction between the individual and culture through mediation, which is a creation of human labour. In the context of this study, psychological and material tools and interpersonal interaction play the critical role of median. Such artifacts as language, various systems of counting, symbol systems, artworks, guidelines, writing, schemes, notes, diagrams, maps, and mechanical drawings constitute mediational means (Wertsch, 1995). The basic concept of Vygotsky's theory is that all human activities are mediated by culturally created signs and tools in social interaction and, higher mental functions are activated in this process. Through interaction and engagement in activity, with mediation by signs and tools, the PUPT's internal mental state is transformed.

Internal activity cannot be analysed and understood as distinct from external activity, they mutually penetrate, control and affect each other. The inner mental activity arises from external activity; internalization. Thus, professional development, an internal activity arises out of external activities such as teaching practice. Internalisation therefore refers to conversion of external activity into internal activity (Vygotsky, 1987). On the other hand, externalisation changes an internal activity into an external activity. Thus, internalisation can only manifest itself in external practical actions performed by individuals (Waite, 2006). In the context of this study, internalisation represents the PUPTs' capacity to imagine, view alternatives to problems, perform mental simulations, reflect, improvise etc. Thus, the PUPTs' ability to externalise transforms internalised actions into external ones i.e. putting the actions into practice. Vygotsky's notion of mediation and learning in activity was driven by a desire to eliminate the Cartesian walls i.e. the separation of the mind and the world (intellectual and practical). He attempted to answer the question of how collective (inter-mental) is incorporated into the individual (intra-mental)

consciousness (Zeiliger, 2008). His conception was that behind consciousness is human activity.

With this conception, activity is mediated by tools in a broad sense, which are created and transformed during actual activity development and they bear a particular culture – the historical remains from their development. Hence, the use of mediational tools by the PUPs represents collection and transmission of social knowledge and at the same time shapes both their teaching practice (external behaviour) and mental functioning. Vygotsky conceived activities as mediated by society, tools, practices and understandings salient in cultures (Cole, 1988; Edwards, 2005). In other words, professional development experiences can only be understood as part of collective activity characterized by a division of labour. Thus, activity is not only mediated by cultural means (signs and tools) but also through division of labour, and rules that mediate the interaction among individuals engaged in the collective activity. Individuals therefore only react directly to the phenomenon/environment with mediation by other people through tools and artifacts (Warmington, Daniels et al., 2005). It is from this notion of social impact through mediation by tools and artifacts, that Vygotsky laid the foundation for CHAT.

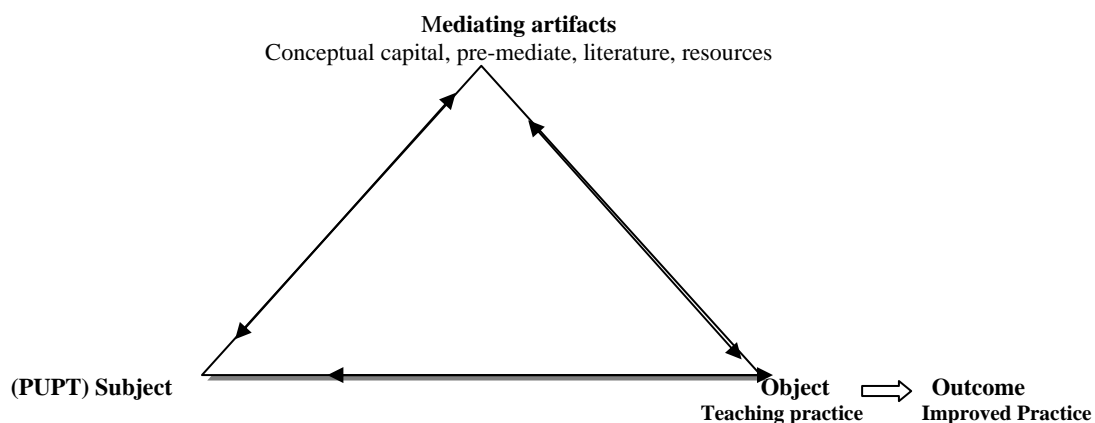
CHAT provides a frame on which to lay out and systematically address the relationships among the multiple elements that make up collective activity (Sawchuk, Durate et al., 2006). The premises of this framework are that: action is purposeful and the purpose shapes and stimulates consciousness; all activity ultimately becomes collective albeit, it may be carried out individually; all activity has historical (material and ideological) dimensions; and, activity is a social construction which is socially mediated by the socially constructed psychological and material tools (Worthen & Berry, 2004). CHAT therefore focuses on how people learn through collective engagement in a particular activity (Worthen & Berry, 2004). In other words, what happens conceptually is not isolated from practical collective activity. Activity is therefore not an individual endeavour, but a socially mediated process, a negotiated or relational interdependence. The theory locates individuals in the activity system as co-learners who jointly create and re-create appropriate conditions and modify them to meet the intended object (Cole, 2004). Teachers

in this study, in the acting and interacting (negotiating and re-negotiating) within the school community, their relationships, actions and interactions are goal (teaching/learning) oriented. This brings about adjustment and transformation of their teaching practices. CHAT has devolved from the first, through the second to the third generation. Its development through the generations is discussed below.

1st Generation Activity Theory

The first generation of activity theory draws on Vygotsky’s ideas of artifact-mediated and object-oriented action. Activity in this conception is reformulated as composed of a subject, and an object mediated by a tool as reflected in Figure 1. In this basic original framework, an activity is oriented to an object (also called motive), the “raw material” or “problem space” to which activity is directed, and the object is transformed through continued action into an outcome (Miettinen, 2006; Shotter, 1993). The activity is therefore acted out by the subject, who forms the focus of the activity. A tool mediates this subject-object relationship.

Figure 1: Reformulation of Vygotsky's model of mediated activity



Activity may thus be viewed as a unity of subject-object as well as subject-subject relations (Hardman, 2007; Rajkumar, 2008). In the context of my study, the PUPT constitutes the subject who can only act on the object teaching practice through utilization of mediating psychological and or material tools and artifacts. It is through these mediating instruments that the subject-object relationship is created. Thus activity is viewed as a person-world or person-person relationship. All activity has an object, which provides the goal. Further, there is no activity without a subject interacting with other subjects (Elhammoumi, 2006).

In the collective process, the subject transforms its object in some way (Edwards, 2005; Warmington, Daniels et al., 2005). Thus through continuous acting on the object (teaching practice) the object is transformed into an outcome (improved practice) and the subject is also transformed. Thus, the object provides activity focus as Billet (2008) notes “It is exactly the object of an activity that gives it its determined direction. The object of an activity, is its true direction” (p.11). In the context of this study, the object teaching practice provides direction and focus of the activity and the subject-object relationship is mediated.

Activity is characterized by essential features like transformation, cognition, communication, value orientation and development (Leont'ev, 1978). It therefore consists of a macrostructure of subjects that interact with objects, in executing certain actions and operations under concrete conditions (Lompscher, 2004). Subjects use certain means to practice their goals and meet their needs and motives (teaching practice) resulting in objective and subjective changes (Lompscher, 2004). In this study, activity exists as a practical and intellectual process which occurs in a school community composed of teachers who act and interact, negotiate and renegotiate as they engage in teaching practices. The practice is within given accepted parameters in their class and school contexts. Tools facilitate engagement in teaching practices i.e. acting on the object to transform it to an outcome.

2nd Generation of Activity Theory

Vygotsky's work offers the unit of analysis as the object-oriented action mediated by cultural tools and signs (Edwards, 2005). Thus, while his conception is underpinned by collective social activity, the role assumed by other human beings and social relations in his triangular model of activity is blurred. Leont'ev therefore extended Vygotsky's theory, adding several features to separate individual action and collective activity and came up with activity, action and operation to achieve the object. The discernment of activity, action and operation demarcates individual behaviour from the collective activity. Thus to Leont'ev, while individual activity may be social, it may not necessarily be collective, “...is not collectively shared; the object of activity is individual and it is the true motive”

(Hardman, 2007:113). In the context of the PUPTs, their individual actions (teaching practice) can be performed within social activities. Activity in this context therefore consists of distinct actions or series of actions that in turn consist of operations, and the existence of an object gives rise to the need for this activity. Activity is therefore realized as individual and cooperative actions, and the chains and networks of such actions are interrelated by the same overall object and motive to be achieved (Lompscher, 2004). Thus teaching is through both individual and collective (through negotiation) interrelated actions to achieve the same overall goal teaching practice.

3rd Generation of CHAT

Because of the need to incorporate a shared meaning of activity, Engestrom reconfigured the 2nd generation theory by adding rules, community and division of labour (See Figure 2), and renamed and associated it with an activity system (Rajkumar, 2008). An activity system is a way of visualizing the total configuration of an activity. The model of an activity system as reflected in Figure 2 depicts the subject as referring to the individual (PUPT) whose point of view is taken in the analysis of the activity. The object is the target of the activity within the system and in this context the object is teaching practice.

Mediation means (tools and artifacts) are instruments to mediate or enable achievement of the object and its transformation to an outcome (Billet, 2008). The community represents individuals sharing the object with subjects. Rules standardize actions and interactions within the activity system and division of labour involves the horizontal and vertical distribution of roles and responsibilities amongst community members (Billet, Smith et al., 2004). The existence of an activity is motivated by transformation of the object into an outcome. It is from the 3rd generation of the Activity Theory that this study draws.

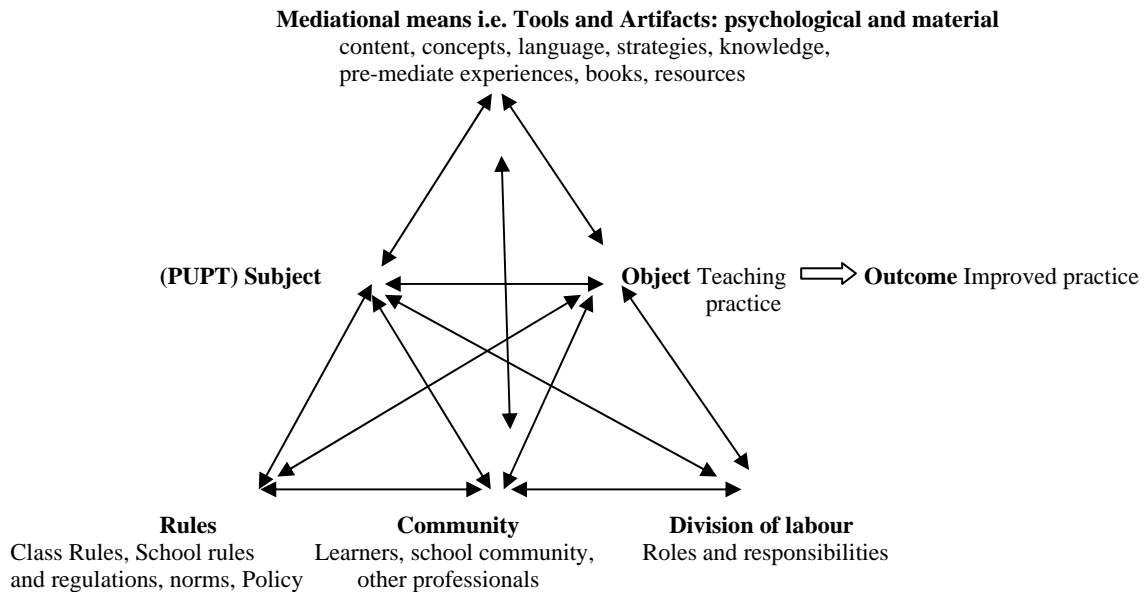
What is Activity Theory

The following section discusses the basic elements and relationships in the activity system as understood in this thesis and illustrated in Figure 2.

The Object

An object in its broadest sense refers to a thing that exists, and in a narrow sense to something withstanding and resistant. Miettinen (2004) defines it as: "... that to which actions are directed, something to which a living creature relates itself as the object of its activity" (p. 301).

Figure 2: 3rd Generation of Activity Theory



To Leont'ev as noted by Zeiliger (2001) the object of an activity is its true motive appearing "as an object of collective social experience: ... the activity of others that provides an objective basis for the specific structure of individual activity or society produces the activity that shapes its individual" (p. 3). For Engestrom, the object is more than the motive driving the activity, it is the raw material or problem space to which the activity is directed and this raw material is moulded and transformed into an outcome. "It is exactly the object of an activity that gives it a determined direction. ...the object of an activity is its true motive" (Kozulin, 2003:116).

It is in this narrow sense that the term is used in this thesis. The object (teaching practice) therefore provides the target of the activity in the system and is achieved through mediation by internal and external tools and artifacts and, through continuous actions is converted into an outcome. Transformation is within the restrictions or possibilities as

determined by mediating tools and artifacts, and it is the transformation of the object into an outcome that motivates the existence of an activity. In other words, it is the desire to achieve improved practice that motivates the activity. The perceived difference between the current state of the object and the desired outcome provides motivation for the subject to develop goals to transform the object into the desired outcome (Kozulin, 2003). Ongoing evaluation and re-evaluation of the object against the desired level of outcome occurs. In other words, in the practice of teaching, on-going evaluation and reflection takes place. The subject and object possess a reciprocal relationship. As the subject transforms the object, equally, properties of the object penetrate the subject and also transform it. Through teaching practice, the PUPT gets transformed / developed. Thus, internalisation occurs at this stage (Waite, 2006). An object appears in two fundamental roles: as an object and as a tool or artifact as defined by Hardman; "... nothing in the material make-up of an object would determine which one it is: object or tool (2007:6). Thus the object of activity for Engestrom relates to production while the object driving force behind performance of an activity, contrary to the object in Leont'ev's view that relates object to motive.

Mediational Means (Tools and Artifacts)

The mediational means, the tools and artifacts represent the the psychological and materials tools and resources i.e. conceptual capital, internal and external instruments and, material tools and resources that enable the subject to act on the object. In other words these are content knowledge, concepts, language, teaching strategies and pre-mediate experiences inclusive of all other resources at PUPTs' disposal. Vygotsky (1978) called these 'auxiliary stimulus,' and Wartofsky described them as "...the artifact is to cultural evolution what the gene is to biological evolution..." ((1979:29). Thus, it is these psychological and material tools and artifacts that enable achievement of the object teaching practice and its transformation into an outcome.

The subject is the individual performing the activity, and the object is that being worked on through mediational means. In other words, artifacts are integral and inseparable components of human functioning (Wartofsky, 1979). Further, the use of mediational means i.e. psychological and material tools and artifacts indicate human consciousness.

What a person practices reveals their consciousness (Lektorsky, 2004). The implication in this study is that an activity can only be performed in the presence of the triad – subject, mediational tools and artifacts and, the object. How the PUPT engages in teaching practice reveals their perception. All this occurs within the activity system and, in the context of this study the school community represents the activity system. A tool is understood not as a thing in itself but viewed from a carpenter’s perspective, with regard to what a carpenter has to do with it (Cole & Engestrom, 1993). Tools are more than particular things. They represent both psychological and material things in which a “connection, a sequential bond of nature is embedded” (Miettinen, 2006:395). The primary relationship is towards other external things and can therefore be regarded as the controlling principle that regulates and orders the “connections of things” (Miettinen 2006:395). Thus, tools control the connection between subject and object (enactment of subject on the object). In the context of this study, mediating tools represent the resources mobilized by the PUPT as mediation of thought during interaction and engagement with the context within an activity. The tools are non-neutral, but carry and possess established history and cultural meanings for their utilization.

Through engagement with mediational tools and artifacts to transform the object, expansive learning occurs (Miettinen, 2006). This is the capacity to interpret and expand the definition of the object of activity and respond in increasingly enriched ways (Miettinen, 2006). Learning to teach is therefore expansive, due to the relation of the individual and society, all new individual level possibilities of acting are also an expansion of action at collective level (Daniels, 2004). Daniels further explains: “For practitioners such learning may be evidenced in enhanced analyses of the potential of education ...of their own capacities for professional action ... their dispositions to recognize and engage with available expertise in complex work places” (2004:190). The ability to interpret the object, taking appropriate action to transform it indicates expansive learning.

The Subject

The subject represents the individual (PUPT) or group engaged in an activity. The subject is the focus of this study. The object, that which gives direction to activity, is held by the

subject. Through mediation by tools and artifacts, the subject acts on the object to transform it into an outcome (Cole & Engestrom, 1993). Mediation can occur through many different types of tools; material and/or psychological, including cultural norms of thinking and language. The stabilizing feature of every activity system is therefore the subject's motive which locates the subject intentionally with regard to the object, the thing transformed by the activity and the activity's purpose.

The Community

Activity Theory considers the entire activity system beyond just one subject, but multiple individuals (including teams, associations, organizations, etc.) sharing the same general object and constructing themselves as distinct from other groups (Dayton, 2006). A community is therefore comprised of two or more people who share the object with the subject. In this study learners, in-school and out-of-school colleagues, parents, DoE etc constitute different dimensions of the community. The subject belongs to multiple communities that engage with the shared object. The subject-community relationship is mediated by rules and division of labour (Urden, Valderas et al., 2008). As all activity bears a social component due to the historico-sociological structure of activity, the subject will always belong to more than one community, all intending to achieve the object (Waite, 2006). In the context of this study all would be interested in the teaching practice.

The community through mediation of activity, may oppose or support, facilitate or impede the activity (Engestrom, 1999) or impose rules on the subject or allow them discretion in their activities (Waite, 2006). In the context of this study, the community 'rules' over the kind of products, knowledge and experiences acceptable or approved, access to tools and artifacts, who is permitted to do which aspects of the activity in the community. Thus the school or DoE (community) therefore shapes and refines tools (materials) for use in transforming the object into an outcome. Tools become unacceptable to the community when they are opposed to the existing policies, rules, values, goals and other tools of the community, and will not be adopted as tools by that community. Hence the subject needs a firm understanding of how the target community is currently accomplishing their work and the historical development of the current practices (Kaptelinin, 2008).

Rules

Rules regulate actions and interactions within the activity system. In the wider school community, rules imply the policies, norms, customs, guidelines and standards that guide the activity system under focus (Waite, 2006). In this study, the wider community (DoE) creates rules that inform the subject about the object (i.e. the focus of activity) and the desired outcome, the subject's position in the community, the manner in which they act and interact, negotiate and renegotiate as a community member as well as the manner of enacting on the object. Thus, rules in this study are the implicit or explicit norms, conventions and social relations within that community with regard to PUPT enacting the object teaching practice, and the object's transformation into an outcome improved practice. Activity theory demonstrates how the individuals are shaped and moulded by community social dynamics, there is however, freedom to decide on community rules (Worthen & Berry, 2004). The subject (PUPT) evaluates the rules and may suggest revisions or new ones. Waite observes that rules may be illuminative and restrictive, illuminative in guiding the current activity and restrictive when they inhibit use or search for alternative approaches to the activity.

Division of Labour

Within the community is division of labour with on-going negotiation and renegotiation of responsibilities, tasks and power (Urden, Valderas et al., 2008). Thus the object-community relationship is mediated by a division of labour in terms of distribution of activity among community members. The terms of mediation are historically formed. Division of labour therefore represents the role each community subject (teacher) assumes in the activity system, the power each wields and tasks that each is accountable for (Urden, Valderas et al., 2008). This includes both horizontal and vertical divisions of roles and tasks as well as power and status within the community (Waite, 2006). The Rules-Community-Division of Labour triad constitutes the vital social unit in the activity system. A community with rules, and through some process, splits roles for its members to enable individuals to collectively engage in different kinds of work holding different positions. In the school activity system, the collective activity is broken up into manageable parts -

teachers teaching different classes, HoDs leading departments etc. The PUPT needs other teachers (other subjects) for negotiation and renegotiation. There is also the school management and the DoE who determine and guide what curriculum should be taught. The language used emanates from decades of refinement and social processes reflecting the socio-political history.

This section has illustrated how the different elements of the activity system within the CHAT framework can be understood in the context of this study. Given the collective nature of activity, tensions and contradictions will always occur in the activity system. Contradictions are discussed in the following section.

Contradictions

Contradictions are accumulating structural tensions within and between activity systems (Waite, 2006). They are not inherently bad, but generate disturbances which create force and motive for change and development (Daniels, 2004; Roth & Tobin, 2004). In this study, contradictions are understood to imply diversion from the expected norms and practices. Development implies ability to solve or come up with innovative attempts for altering the existing contradiction, and consequently resulting in positive changes in the activity system. As noted by Edwards: “Tensions and contradictions beget a capacity for interpreting and approaching contradictions; contesting interpretations; reading the environment; for drawing on the resources there; for being a resource for others; for focusing on the core objects” (2005:13).

Where two or more activity systems come into contact, contradictions and tensions are likely to erupt and through addressing those contradictions, expansive learning is possible (Waite, 2006). Further, when teachers as practitioners engage in debate, discussion and reflection on contradictions, learning beyond what was initially possible in the activity system occurs. The nature of the complex social fabric generates unpredictable, sometimes irrational actions. Failures, disruptions, and unanticipated and unforeseen innovations arise in the midst of competing goals, limited resources and incompatible values, and desired outcomes within the activity system (Davydov, 2004). Engestrom (2004) calls all these

conflicting forces; contradictions that may give rise failures and disruptions or may necessitate innovations and this leads to learning. In the classroom situation, contradictions may be created by limited guidance, access to resources, limited content knowledge and PCK for handling particular units. Change and development, occurs when the subject fully conceives the structure of the activity system to appropriately locate contradictions that limit productivity in terms of enacting the object, likely to bring about transformation.

When the subject begins to change conditions of their work, they provide the conditions in which expansive learning can occur (Alberta, 2008; Daniels, 2004). The implication for the PUPTs is that expansive learning occurs more easily when the all units in the activity system, begin to articulate, share and remove existing structural contradictions. With negotiation and renegotiation, the subject and the community gain opportunities to create new possibilities for concrete action and change (Davydov, 2004; Lektorsky, 2004). Identifying contradictions gives rise to effective ways to mediate their effects and encourage creation of innovations to overcome them, which brings about development. Further, reflection on and alteration of models and tools become the avenues out of these internal contradictions (Miettinen, 2001; Roth & Tobin, 2004). Tensions and contradictions therefore create capacities for understanding, interpreting, explaining, reflecting and, consequently devising some averting means and in the process transformation takes place. Thus, contradictions are an inherent aspect of an activity system.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the theoretical framework that informed the inquiry and guided data collection and analysis, namely, CHAT. CHAT has the potential for providing a lens for understanding the key issues involved in how the PUPTs experience professional development through collective engagement in the teaching activity within the fundamental social unit; rules-community-division of labour in a rural school activity system. Informed by the theoretical framework presented above, five key but tentative propositions linked to the sub-questions and based on professional development experiences of the teachers under study emerge (Roth & Tobin, 2004). The propositions

are only tentative and therefore need probing against empirical evidence from the study. They however remain open to further exploration beyond the scope of my own study. The first sub-question is: what is the nature of professional development practices of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools? The thesis proposes that the PUPTs engage in professional development in interaction within four domains: formal, experiential, non-formal and informal. As such, part of the study's data collection, particularly the interviews, focussed on how teachers learn within the domains. The second sub-question is: How does support by colleagues and the university enhance professional development practices of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools? The thesis proposes that there are contextual variations of both in-school and external support enjoyed by these teachers. Data gathering examined whether or not there was any support.

The third sub-question is: What are the professional developmental needs of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools? The thesis proposes that their needs relate to: support in terms of resources, supervision and guidance, pedagogy, class management and control, and curriculum interpretation. As such, the study's data collection and analysis processes examined what the teachers would need to grow further in the profession. The fourth sub-question of the study is: What are the conceptions of the PUPTs of their professional development experiences at rural secondary school level? The thesis proposes that relational dimensions and collaboration namely personal, interpersonal, intra-professional and inter-professional agency underpin professional development experiences of the PUPTs in rural schools. The fifth sub-question is: How do the differing contexts at school, system and national level affect the professional development experiences? The thesis proposes there are variations in both in-school and external supervisory and material support. There are also variations in teacher commitment and retention. Given the foregoing discussion, the study suggests that needs for PUPTs in rural schools revolve around internal and external support, class management and control, and pedagogy and curriculum.

As an analytical tool, CHAT was not completely helpful for analysing professional development processes dealing with domains and levels of formality and experience and,

to understand the issue of the object of activity as a true motive. A full critique of CHAT and an additive model developed to expand the framework and extend its applicability in understanding professional development issues is provided in Chapter 8. Locating this section in Chapter 8 became necessary as the inadequacies of the CHAT framework only emerged during the post data generation analysis.

The next chapter, Chapter 5, discusses research design and methodology adopted for the study.

Chapter 5

Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

The study sought to explore professional development experiences of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools. It aimed at developing a deeper understanding of the ways these teachers engage in professional development practices in rural secondary school settings. The previous chapter focused on the theoretical framework that frames this study. The present chapter describes and explains the research design and methodology adopted. First, I discuss the ethical considerations taken. Then I describe the design, broadly positioning the study in the qualitative research paradigm and specifically discussing underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions. Third, I identify the study participants and then describe the process of sampling. Fourth, the chapter explains the three chosen methods of data collection: document reviews, interview and photo elicitation. I describe the processes I followed in data collection and the data generation challenges faced in Zimbabwe due to the political situation. Fifth, I discuss how I analysed data following open coding as the analytical tool. Sixth, I narrate the steps I followed to gain entry into the research site and finally describe the attempts made to enhance rigour throughout the study. The chapter folds with a brief discussion of some key design limitations of the study and how the inquiry attempted to address them. As the discussion indicates, data generation and analysis in this study were informed by a number of ethical considerations.

Ethical Considerations

Given the nature of my study, which was bound to touch on personal information, I chose to foreground the ethical dimension before engaging in more technical aspects of the enquiry. I therefore deliberately located the section here, as ethics forms a central component of doing this kind of research and thus want to discuss it upfront.

Ethics is a branch of philosophy and theology that deals with the question of ‘what ought to be done’ and it involves a study of behaviour, posing questions concerning moral and responsible research (Singleton & Straits, 1999). Hence to be ethical in research is to conform to accepted professional research practice. Terre-Blanche and Durrheim (2002:65) add that “the essential purpose of ethical research planning is to protect the welfare and rights of research participants”. These authorities suggest three principles to guide ethical decisions, namely: participants’ autonomy, non-maleficence, and beneficence.

To fulfil the first principle - participants’ autonomy - I obtained voluntary and informed consent from all participants. This involved making the intended participants fully aware of the purpose of the study as well as any possible dangers and benefits, and making the researcher’s credentials known to them before they make a commitment. The consent letters offered participants an opportunity to opt out if they so wished, but fortunately none of them chose to withdraw from the study. The letters also offered consent for the use of their photographs in the thesis. Not only did I explain their right regarding withdrawal, but also their right to review the material. Further, the formal consent requests were only signed after clarifications and discussion had enhanced their confidence. My contact details in Zimbabwe and South Africa as well as my supervisor’s contact details were clearly outlined as recommended by de Vos, Strydom et al. (2005).

Participants were assured of a high degree of confidentiality of the data that they would provide (Terre-Blanche, Durrheim et al., 2007b). Henning (2005) advises that research participants need information on those aspects of material from interviews that would be shared with the public and those that would be kept confidential. This included an assurance of anonymity, and storage of all the data including processing for release in cumulative terms. Keeping material ‘confidential’ in this study implied that no one else saw it save the researcher and supervisor, and confidentiality also included participants’ right to privacy. Such details were discussed in plain and comprehensible terms. While what constitutes invasion of privacy may be subjective, scholars such as Woods (2006) and Henning (2005) advise that questions that spawn anxiety or guilt in a participant are an invasion of privacy. Hence to ensure participants’ right to privacy, interviews were carried

out on a one-on-one basis, and the semi-structured questions were such that they did not conjure up any anxieties. Further, in the written discussion, the schools and participants were all identified numerically.

Terre-Blanche and Durrheim's (2002) second principle, non-maleficence refers to participants' protection from any harm or danger. Protection from harm encompasses any physical, emotional and social infliction of pain a study may bring about (Henning, 2005). In this study, no physical harm was envisaged and fortunately none occurred, and to ensure no emotional harm was inflicted, the approaches described above were also applied. Again, study participants were not in the 'vulnerable populations, category' i.e. young children, mentally challenged, etc. but university graduate teachers. They were therefore well positioned to understand all insinuations of the different aspects of my study and make informed decisions to, or not to, participate.

Further to these ethical considerations, my research was informed by what Bogdan and Biklen (1992) define as the common sense and moral responsibility of qualitative researchers. This is premised on the notion that researching people requires treating them as people so that they reveal their lives to the researcher freely. This advice was useful in this study. The participants were free to air their views as freely as possible without undue direction, re-direction and pressuring. All their contributions were appreciated including those with little or no bearing to the study, as long as this made the participant feel that their contribution was valued and respected. However, use of the term 'free' does not imply entire freedom from all psychological issues related to social, cultural and power constraints which position them in particular spaces.

This advice confirms what is demanded of researchers, that they should observe the "non-negotiable values of honesty, fairness, respect for persons and beneficence"(Soltis, 1989:129). In the context of this study, as the researcher, I would not be expected to harm the participants I was researching - if anything, I wanted to leave them better rather than worse off. Again, as a moral person, a Catholic brought up in strong Christian background where moral values are central, I value, respect and would not want to harm other human beings. Given this background, my own moral values informed my application of

procedural and regulatory ethical issues. In this study therefore, I offered participants a choice of whether or not to be engaged as study participants and informed them adequately about the research.

Seidman (1998) alludes to exploitation through interviewing. A closer look at this aspect would suggest some degree of exploitation in the study, thereby compromising this aspect of non-maleficence. Seidman posits that interviewing as exploitation provides contradiction and tension. During my data generation, I was particularly sensitive to this aspect and each time I felt a participant was showing signs of being exploited I abandoned him/her. However, whilst I never had to abandon any of the participants for this reason, I ended up dropping one of the SA participants, who continued to miss appointments. As participants were full-time teachers, I was very cautious about time and wherever possible interviews were conducted within the set time to avoid prejudice to them and their learners.

Terre-Blanche and Durrheim's third principle addresses beneficence and is closely related to the first two discussed above. According to these authors, the principle "requires the researcher to design the research such that it will be of benefit, if not directly to research participants then, more broadly to other researchers and society at large" (2002:66). In their concluding remarks after interview three, participants claimed to have learnt a lot from the research as expressed by the comments below:

These interviews have been an eye-opener, they enabled me to see that we are appreciated, this makes us assess ourselves ... the system will grow that way. ... still, we are not yet fully baked, we still want to learn and to make sure that the teaching/learning process develops ... I have learnt. Yeah (Zim Teacher 3).

I am saying thank you very much Mrs - Today I felt I have gained so much from you ... learning takes time and needs patience hence ... (Zim Teacher 2).

The above were the general comments given by most participants. In addition, participants did not bear any financial costs for participation as and when it was necessary for them to incur expenses. The Zimbabwean teachers were all reimbursed by the researcher for any transport, lunch and airtime expenses when it became necessary to hold interviews in town. For the South African teachers, where they were not interviewed at their schools, interviews were always scheduled when they came for their face-to-face contact sessions at

the university. Finally, the choice to engage in this study was important and worthwhile to me, which makes it an ethical consideration of its own. As an academic and a researcher, I hoped that other researchers and society would benefit in some small way from this piece of work. Having provided in great detail the ethical consideration with regards to this study, the next section discusses research design.

Research Paradigm

Paradigms provide background information on what obtains or what exists in relation to a phenomenon, and what and how it can be studied and understood (Bailey, 2007). The study sought to explore professional development experiences of PUPTs in rural secondary schools. The inquiry therefore draws on the interpretive paradigm, which assumes an inter-subjective, ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological stance. As the paradigm lends itself to the collection of subjective accounts of the participants' experiences of the phenomenon (Henning, 2005) this enabled descriptions of PUPTs' accounts of their professional development experiences in rural secondary schools. Thus, how participants defined their experiences and situations could only be understood through interaction.

Qualitative Design

A research design is described by Bhengu (2005) as some pattern or plan adopted by the researcher to obtain evidence that answer research questions. Cresswell (2008) calls it a plan or proposal to conduct research, which involves the intersection of philosophy, strategies of inquiry and specific methods. The nature of my study which aimed at exploring experiences, located it in the qualitative design where interviews, photo elicitation and document reviews were employed as data generation strategies. In this section I highlight and describe the procedures undertaken in the conduct of the research answering to such questions as: What did I do? How did I do it? Why did I do it? When did I do it? And where did I do it?

Critical to the qualitative research design is flexibility, which enables adjustment of the direction of inquiry from ongoing experiences during generation and reflection on the data (Gomm, 2004; Henning, 2005). This aspect enabled modifications to my data generation instrument after the first interview. Qualitative researchers value multi-method approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This aspect facilitated triangulation of interviews, photo elicitation and document reviews to explore the phenomenon from diverse participant perspectives. Cresswell (1998) points to some qualitative data collection traditions as observations, unstructured interviews and document reviews. The value of the multi-method approach lies in the complementary nature of data generated through multiple methods (Cohen, Manion et al., 2000). In this study, apart from enabling methods to filter one another as shortcomings of one are complemented by strengths of the other, this reduced method boundedness. Employing multi-methods minimizes exclusive reliance on one and gives a more complex picture of reality under exploration (Cohen et al., 2004). This provides a multifaceted view of the phenomenon however not necessarily implying closeness to the truth.

Methodology

Methodology refers to the theory of knowledge, how we come to know in a practical sense as opposed to epistemology, which addresses how we come to know in a philosophical sense. Epistemology and methodology are interdependent, as Henning (2005:3) puts it, “intimately related” one being the philosophy, the other the practice. Thus, epistemology is the theory of knowing while methodology is the practice. Methodology in this context refers to specific methods and techniques i.e. interviews, photo elicitation and document reviews employed for data generation to enable understanding the phenomenon: the professional development experiences of PUPTs in rural schools.

Sampling

Given the location of the study in the interpretive/qualitative framework, the sample size had to be characteristically fairly small. Twelve participants, six teachers from each of the two countries participated in the study. In SA, four were women and two were men, and in

Zimbabwe there were two women and four men. Purposive sampling was the over-arching sampling design for this study. Purposive sampling enables targeting those participants that are likely to yield the richest data for the topic. A broad criterion was adopted to select participants: being in the final year of PGCE/PGDE on the part-time mixed/distance education mode, able to speak English, and teaching in a rural secondary school.

Drawing on Bhengu, "...the researcher must ensure that informants are information rich" (2005:58) and Denzin and Lincoln (1994) add that purposive sampling extracts groups, settings and individuals where the processes under exploration are likely to occur. Participants fitted within the definitions as elucidated by Bhengu and Denzin and Lincoln. Stones (1988) gives three additional criteria for selection of participants for qualitative research: they must have experienced the phenomenon under exploration, possess verbal fluency for communicating thoughts, feelings and perceptions, and should have some sense of commitment to the research. Within Stones's criteria, I convinced myself that the first criteria was fulfilled as all my participants had completed the first year of part-time study through mixed /distance education mode and had thus acquired some professional development experiences.

Stones's second criteria i.e. verbal fluency to enable easy communication of feelings, thoughts and perceptions was pivotal as the face-to-face interview was the main data generation instrument. I understand being verbally fluent in this study as implying ability to speak with ease, choosing and using appropriate words effortlessly when responding to questions and probes. These participants were university graduates and the interviews sought simple, narrated stories of their professional development experiences in a rural school, not sophisticated levels of interaction. Thus, criteria two would be fulfilled. Participants were required to capture my language since drawing out of thoughts, feelings and perceptions depends in the main on the skill of the researcher who should capture experiences, relevant and connected to the phenomenon, and be able to probe them further.

In terms of commitment, I derived confidence given that participants understood their involvement as voluntary. Their acceptance to work with me and the warm welcome they offered during my interim familiarization visits to their schools pointed towards

commitment to my study. However, the one participant that I had to drop as alluded to earlier on probably had limited commitment. Another testimony of this commitment was visible through their willingness to avail themselves for the three separate interviews, to take photographs for photo elicitation and also offer their teaching documents for scrutiny. Further, on the South African side, the fact that participants agreed to some interviews conducted when they came for face-to-face encounters was another indication of their commitment. Again given that the Zimbabwean teachers put up with a lot of sacrifice to communicate and/or travel because of the political situation, was testimony of their commitment. Participants offered unhurried time during the three interviews, displayed readiness to read through transcriptions, and my following up on any questions and gaps were all indicators of their commitment.

Within purposive sampling, convenience sampling was used. Convenience sampling involves taking subjects that are presented to the researcher in a mere happenstance and convenient mode (Leedy, 1997). In meeting Leedy's view, for this study I used convenient provinces, KwaZulu-Natal in SA by virtue of its being the locale for UKZN, my PhD host university, and Masvingo province in Zimbabwe, being my home province and the location of my workplace. Within the provinces I selected those districts conveniently located in terms of distance from my university campuses in both SA and Zimbabwe.

Sample Selection

In order to identify possible participants at the UKZN, I took advantage of the orientation session for the PGCE part-time mixed mode students in the first semester of 2008. I limited my selection to the Pietermaritzburg campus of the UKZN where I was based. Limiting selection to Pietermaritzburg was a strategic choice and decision of convenience, which would reduce the distance between me and my participants, enable meetings and ensure earliest possible commencement of the research process.

I addressed the group discussing and explaining my study fully, my expectations of them and that participation was voluntary. From about fifty students who were present at the session - man and women, African, White, Coloured and Indian, in first or second year, twenty-three volunteered. I then extracted the second years, checking through their records

and contact details and using a map to confirm rurality of their schools. The process left me with eleven participants, all African. I strategically chose to keep that figure so that three would serve as pilot participants to enable me to engage with what I understood to be in-depth interviewing before proceeding with the actual data generation. My inexperience in interviewing from a cross-national/cross-cultural outlook convinced me of the need for pilot testing as this would reward the whole research. Further, keeping all eleven situated gender in some balance thus dropping one at this stage, denoted a gross imbalance with the three men and seven women.

The selection process in Zimbabwe differed from that followed in SA. Selection commenced in January 2008. The provincial education directorate assisted with identification of the closest rural schools. Closest in this regard denoted a school between 40 and 100 kilometres away from Masvingo Town. The exercise at the regional office yielded sixteen schools. Next, I consulted ZOU records to identify possible participants. As all students on this programme were in rural schools of varying distances from town, what was required was to match students and the schools identified as 'closest' by the provincial education directorate. This yielded eight schools, six with one student each, and two with two students each. I chose to keep all ten pending dialoguing with them.

I now needed to visit schools to meet the teachers and their school heads and explain my study. Although I knew some of these students, from my time as PGDE coordinator before embarking on the PhD programme, I intuitively felt that the thrust of my study required willing and keen participants who would freely share to a profound degree of their experiences and transcending sheer opinion recounts. There was no point recruiting someone without inherent desire and commitment to participate. Therefore I chose to meet them face-to-face five months prior to data generation, to listen to their voices and see them directly expressing desire to participate in my study. This also offered an opportunity for them to commit to avail themselves for the three-interview series, and allow me to look at their teaching documents. All heads were agreeable and the teachers very eager and enthusiastic to participate in my study. Explaining why they were so eager to be involved, their responses were varied: they were curious about the conduct of PhD interviews; had never been involved in any research before and so wanted to learn more about interviews;

just wanting to support somebody engaged in an academic activity. However on my return to the schools for the data generation five months later, three of the ten teachers were on leave and one had transferred to another school. This left me with six Zimbabwean participants. Detailed descriptions of their school sites as well as their biographical data and education history which was the push/pull factor into teaching are provided in Chapter 6. The next section describes the process of data generation.

Data Generation

To explore the key question, a series of three in-depth semi structured interviews, photo elicitations and document analysis were used to extract data from participants. Given that participants were to take photographs for use as a basis for Interview Two, interim school visits were vital to establish rapport and humbly present myself as wanting to learn from them, thereby building an atmosphere to foster collaborative data generation. This was premised on the notion that casting one's presentational self is central to elucidating adequate, relevant and appropriate data (Vaughn, Forbes et al., 2008; Warren, 2005). The visits were also crucial for developing data generation schedules and strategizing on the issue of photographs. It was after these visits that the main data generation journey commenced and this is discussed in the following section.

Document Reviews

Flick (2006) notes that documents are standard institutional legal artifacts meant to record routines and information that legitimises procedures for those routines. Documents bear a set of content which should be analysed by examining their reference and patterns of production, and used in their mundane context (Arksey & Knight, 1999). In this study, documents encompass official policy, programme and, teacher's teaching documents. Adopting document review as data generation method was informed by the notion that effectiveness of professional development can be understood against some legal framework. Another consideration was informed by Hargreaves's (2001) observations that efforts on teacher professional development often fail because the contexts in which teachers operate are not clearly understood. In this study, documents represented important

reflectors of the context in which professional development experiences would be understood.

Further, given that teaching documents are viewed as part of the teachers' 'natural' situation, reviewing them revealed a lot about their practices, and prompted some pertinent questions to pursue in interviews. Documents were therefore contextualized within circumstances of their construction and so my task was to determine their content, how they were constructed, used and interpreted. Adler and Adler (1998) and Henning with van Rensburg et al. (1998) concur that through official document, researchers can access the 'official perspective' as well as uncover ways through which school personnel communicate. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) add that internal documents, originated and circulated within an institution, tend to follow a pattern, such as a hierarchical one. In the context of this study, they revealed rich information on institutional formal and experiential interactions and values for instance, record books made a fruitful source of data, not so much for the students' performance *per se*, but what they illuminated about those involved with them.

Official documents were analysed to capture and understand the official perspectives regarding professional development of PUPTs in rural schools. Given that the official perspective is meant to inform practice, often there is a fit with the latter. Thus, reviews were intended to assist in determining whether or not there was a match or mismatch between policy and practice. Such information provided leads to interviews and interviews would respond to the 'why' and 'how' questions (Seidman, 1998).

Interviews

Interviews ranged from one-and-a-half to two hours and were semi-structured around Seidman's (1992) interviewing model. Seidman advocates the use of interactionist ideas as the basis for the structure and concentrates on enabling participants to explore and reflect on their life history. In this study it was not so much of their life history but education history that led them to talking about current professional development experiences. Considering that all their professional development experiences needed to be discussed in

the context of the individual, Seidman suggests that interview data should involve more than a single interview.

Questions revolved around what Seidman (1998) views as necessary for phenomenological in-depth interviews. Themes included their education history, the details of experiences and conceptions of those experiences. In this regard, interview protocols resembled those adopted by Hargreaves (1998) and Hargreaves (2001) i.e. asking participants to describe important events in their lives. Participants were thus asked to describe important events in their education history and in their practice as teachers in a rural secondary school setting. However, unlike Hargreaves, a series of three interviews proffered an opportunity to collect and analyse data simultaneously. Linking data collection and analysis enabled adjustments to the interview schedule to incorporate modifications to questions. Informed by Seidman's (1998) notion of multi-interviews, the study adopted a three-interview series approach to data generation, which is discussed below.

Three-Interview Series Approach

Interviews of by their nature foster flexible questioning and rephrasing (Seidman, 1998). The one-on-one, semi-structured, in-depth Three-Interview series approach adopted in this study was informed by Brown and Dowling (1998) who work on loose guidelines with open-ended questions to facilitate comprehensive answers by participants. Utilizing loose guidelines enabled me to modify and align discussions with requirements of diverse contexts in data generation. This facilitated building on and exploring responses to these broad open-ended questions to enable participants to construct their experiences within the topic. Responses were contextualised, as interviews were done over 1 – 2 weeks of each other to confirm internal consistency of participants' stories. This also facilitated comparisons and connections of experiences of different respondents. Given that dependence on participants' words and voices is a typical feature of qualitative enquiry, and that tape recordings produce complete verbal transcripts, interviews were recorded to allow capturing of every detail (Judd & Kidder, 1991). Further, recording enabled me to take sparse notes while attending fully to the interviewee and upholding the flow of conversation.

The three-interview series approach further draws on Seidman (1998) who notes the value of relevant context to information sought from each particular interview to minimize the impact of context interference. Seidman points out that people's behaviour is more meaningful and understandable within some context as the absence of context presents limited possibility for exploration of the meaning of an experience. The three separate interviews located each interview within some relevant context and at the same time minimized prolonged interviews which would probably interfere with their teaching roles and create some restlessness.

The first interview was in two stages: Focused education history, and Details of experience. Focused education history provided information, which set the context of the participant's experience. This was based on the assumption that their education experiences would connect them to events, which answered the question 'how' they ended up enrolling on the programmes. The 'how' aspect led them to talking about their current experiences. Details of experiences enabled reconstruction of details of their experiences within the context in which experiences occurred. They gave details of their present professional development experiences, reconstructing the details of what they actually did, how, when and with who, etc. They also reconstructed a typical working day in their teaching, from waking up to retiring at night to enable them to describe and define their practices. Subsequent to the first interview was Interview 2 based on photo elicitation.

Photo Elicitation

Photo elicitation was based on photographs taken by participants depicting their professional development experiences. Given that these photographs were used as prompts in the interviews, I choose to attach the photographs on CD as an appendix (see Appendix 10). Harper (1998) regards research practice as visual as its business is to describe the participants' worlds to readers - to foster visualizing the worlds of researchers. The vital thing is to get others to 'see' what the researcher has 'seen' during their research journey. Photo elicitation therefore enabled me to 'see' what had been seen by participants as it involved participants stating their opinions about the images (Heiseley & Levy, 1991; Warren, 2005). The use of this method was informed by Warren (2005) who asserts that

what photos show actually existed in front of the camera for at least the time the camera took to make the exposure. Thus these photographs illustrated things as they really were and how they were experienced given that photographs are representations and, not constructions of reality. They therefore depicted the professional development practices as they were experienced.

Warren (2005) contends that the photograph itself contains little meaning; full meaning is generated through the context within which it is made. Thus, only the photographer can extract that information. The meaning of the event to the photographer renders it valuable for capturing and that meaning is only known by them (Barthes, 1993). Participants in this study captured those aspects that depicted and represented their work life. Photographs in this study provided prompts for critical and analytical dialogue, through exploring their meanings during the interview. Participants explained the significance and meaning of the photographs, the “in” the photograph (Smith & Woodward, 1999) which awaited verbal release. They articulated their feelings and opinions about their professional development experiences as those sentiments were directed at something tangible made by themselves. Thus they discussed life as they saw it in relation to their professional development experiences. Interview 3 enabled the PUPTs to reflect on their professional development experiences in these rural secondary schools.

Reflection on Meaning

In this final interview, which concluded the main data generation phase, participants reflected on meanings of their experiences, the connections between their life as students and their work as PUPTs in rural secondary schools, and how these factors contributed to their present situation. They examined their present experiences in detail within the context of the rural school in which these experiences were occurring.

My fieldwork however was not without challenges, these experiences and challenges are discussed in the next section.

Challenges Faced in Data Generation

Apart from the frustrations from a lot of anxiety emanating from participants' failure to honour interview appointments, prompting additional trips, fieldwork in SA did not pose major challenges. The Zimbabwean situation due to the political circumstances, presented some serious challenges, which are discussed in this section.

Qualitative data gathering involves prolonged fieldwork and requires long-term engagement. Duration of fieldwork varies from study to study but Bailey (2007:36) notes that "... however long you think your particular research will take is probably an underestimation of the time you will actually need" In my situation however, time allowance for unanticipated happenings was overlooked. My tight research design allowed me limited time for the Zimbabwean fieldwork and as a result I disregarded building in any contingency time. I overlooked the fact that things may go wrong, and expected to have accomplished the fieldwork in five weeks, which unfortunately was not possible Bailey (2007) advise that fieldwork is a longer, more active process than envisioned, one that often produces surprising snags. Qualitative fieldwork in rural areas is even more challenging due to poor topography and limited service provision. Scholars (Rios, 1988; HSRC, 2005; Mulkeen, 2006) confirm that rurality is marked by poor topography and other physical infrastructures, inadequate provision of communication and other facilities. However, such challenges are not part of this discussion. My description focuses on the contextual, logistical and psychological challenges spawned by the contextual political situation.

Contextual Challenges

With regard to the political environment, Zimbabwe held parliamentary and presidential elections on 29 March 2008. Results of the presidential component of the elections were contested and consequently not published until six weeks later. A subsequent decision (within the Zimbabwean Constitution) to hold presidential run-off elections on 27 June 2008 was taken. The period May and June was therefore preparation time for political parties through various forms of campaigning strategies ranging from peaceful campaigns in some areas to violent ones in other areas. The Security Council condemned the issue of violence during the period preceding the presidential run-off elections.

The Security Council condemns violence ahead of the second round of the presidential elections scheduled for 27 June. The killing of scores of opposition activists, beating and displacement of thousands of people, including many women and children (Security Council, 2008:1).

Discussing political violence in Zimbabwe, The Daily News revealed that:

... 1 000 people have been displaced because of the 27 June presidential run-off election campaign violence in Masvingo province. Teachers and polling agents are the principal victims of the witch-hunt (Daily News Political Reporter, 2008:3).

This political situation created volatility throughout the country and the situation was worse in rural areas. It was during this campaigning period that I set out to do data gathering in rural secondary schools. Coinciding my data gathering with the presidential run-off elections was not a deliberate choice. The fieldwork had been planned long before the decision for the run-off elections was taken. Further to the volatile political situation prevailing then, Zimbabwe was going through a prolonged period of serious economic and social challenges emanating from sky-rocketing inflation, shortages of fuel, water and electricity, absence of foreign currency and limited money supply from the banks, and absence of medicines in hospitals, basic commodities, services and food in shops.

Reporters Without Borders had this to say:

Zimbabwe's economy has been in crisis, on a steep downturn for nearly a decade with rampant inflation, 'de-industrialisation,' an estimated 90 per cent unemployment, severe shortages of fuel, electricity, food, and medical drugs, widespread hunger and at least 80 per cent of the population living below the poverty line (Reporters Without Borders, 2008:3).

The contextual situation spawned logistical challenges discussed in the following section.

Logistical Challenges

Logistical challenges in qualitative fieldwork generally relate to gaining access, fears and frustrations from unanticipated problems, limited communication and other services, etc. These become aggravated in a politically volatile environment. Fieldwork in rural, politically unstable environments can be a daunting experience. The challenges I met were broadly logistical and these spawned psychological problems. Specifically my major

problem emanated from accessing the study participants. This aspect is discussed in relation to gatekeepers, poor communication facilities, lack of appropriate services and limited fuel provision in the first section. The second section focuses on psychological challenges.

Accessing schools and participants turned into a problem during the second round of interviews due to the political situation. New gatekeepers emerged, manning the roads, granting or denying permission to proceed and, demanding among others an additional 'identification card', other than the legal national Identity card or driver's licence. Consequently, permission for me to proceed was denied on three different occasions and on different routes within one week. Given the political situation that was prevailing, any visitor was perceived by one political group as spying for the other. Being considered a spy had serious consequences ranging from being abducted, abused and killed to being abused and kept hostage as experienced by the victim described by Bakwa (2008:3) below.

... Was walking home from the bus stop around 2-3 pm when suddenly a group of youths appeared all around me... because they didn't know me, all people from town were labelled MDC and believed to be spying for that party. I was taken hostage by these Zanu-PF youths being led by a major and war veteran and they kept me there for 2 weeks. I had to give in to whatever demands because they would kill me.

Given this context, it meant having either to suspend interviews with the four inaccessible participants until the situation normalized and, meanwhile proceed with the two at accessible schools, or having to take some risks. The latter was more acceptable to me, albeit with these unanticipated problems starting to arise, I felt frustration, anger and panic. What was I going to do? But notwithstanding the fright and frustration, I continued to feel an urge to carry on and this gave me the impetus to keep trying and hoping.

At one of these roadblocks, I was sharply questioned regarding my destination, the object and substance of the visit, political affiliation and whether or not I was a spy. The question on affiliation was the most difficult for me considering that I could not be sure of the affiliation of the people interrogating me. The unexpected harassment was shocking and scary and it was not possible to determine their reaction to responses as well as their next move. I felt highly uncomfortable and frightened, and was harshly commanded to go back and fetch the 'required identification'. My experience in this regard is what Hubbell

(2008:9) explains; "... in not free or partially free societies, academics on research activities are often perceived as spies ...". Other futile access attempts emanated from failure to proceed through to the schools either because the roads were blocked with rubble or the school was deserted. This meant I had to proceed with two participants while figuring out how to get to the other four participants.

Missing appointments for Interview Two with four participants put the entire schedule off course. Three things needed to be done with urgency: first, informing participants about my plight, second, fixing new appointments for the next meeting, and third, getting the photographs to participants for scrutiny and story development. Although we had exchanged contact numbers, getting through to them still remained a big challenge. Telephone networks in Zimbabwe are not accessible everywhere. Easy cell phone access is in town, but beyond a certain radius, to pick up reception, subscribers would need to literally go up a tree to make/receive a call. Lack of telephone access was further compounded by the prevailing national electricity power outage and this worsened the problems of appointments and communication.

When these problems and obstacles prevented me from getting to my participants in the first place, I felt desperate as the urgency of conducting these interviews according to my schedule grew and continued to grow. Out of feelings of desperation, I decided to send text messages one after another to all the participants concerned, hoping that at some point they would get up onto their 'tree' and retrieve the messages. This did work, albeit one and a half weeks later. One crucial aspect that I addressed in my text messages was the ethical issue about their safety given the circumstances. This issue was dealt with upfront when we eventually met for Interview Two, and all the four participants consented to continuing. After the first 'breakthrough' responses, participants would either warn me not to travel, suggest a pick-up point or sneak out into town from where they would communicate and we would proceed from there. I had wanted my interviews within two weeks of each other at the sites. Given that then, I had just about two weeks to hold two interviews each with the four participants and with the mounting intensity of political activity three weeks preceding the presidential run-off elections, that kind of spacing became unfeasible.

Consequently, interviews were conducted within one week of each other. Further, within this new operational timeframe, follow-up interviews with some participants were no longer possible at this stage.

The political situation spawned contextual and environmental volatility, and due to this volatility, I had to make participants feel comfortable and safe about meetings and about sharing their experiences freely. This entailed supplementing their expenses for travel, lunch and airtime. Such gestures were empathetically and responsive, meant to encourage participants ease and willingness to talk, stimulate their motivation and provide them support and confidence (Britten, 2008; Hubbell, 2008). Supplementing their expenses seemingly made participants a little more settled, relaxed and open to express their views and visions, and seemingly enhanced their commitment to my fieldwork. Apparently the participants viewed my data gathering process as a priority, given their other numerous constraints emanating from the political situation. It was a big favour that they afforded the time and effort. Many explanations could be given to answer the question ‘why the commitment?’ such as the payment issue, the neutral venue for interviews, and the lecturer-student relationship that existed before I embarked on the PhD study.

The fact that they used public transport to town, whose timetables were neither known nor fixed, meant that interview time was often reduced, which implied reduced time for eliciting more detailed data and, this likely impacted on data elicited from these participants. As advised by Hurrell (2005) time restrictions may impact negatively on the quality and amount of data captured. Further, taking participants away from their settings contradicts the norm for qualitative research. Qualitative researchers draw on data gathering in the larger, complex and multifaceted settings where the phenomena unfolds, as Bailey metaphorically expressed “... better captured by a movie than by a photograph” (2007:3), and this may have affected the interview content. Nevertheless, after the first 15 to 20 minutes, participants became engaged and trusting. In the prevailing situation, conducting interviews away from participants’ schools and settings was not an intention but the only choice I had in order to complete the interviews. Another challenge that emanated from the political situation was the absence of appropriate service providers to

process disposable films due to the then on-going folding up of established businesses. Lack of skill coupled with load shedding spawned delays in processing photographs and loss of some films.

Again, due to the power outages, transcriptions were not always ready for participant validation. The intention was to give summaries of all transcriptions to participants to judge the accuracy and comprehensiveness in capturing the essence of these data. One way of enhancing trustworthiness and transferability of findings as confirmed by Seidman (1998) is to ensure accuracy in data capturing and transcribing, achieved by giving written accounts back to participants and asking them to verify. However, given the circumstances, producing transcriptions for interviews two and three was difficult. Thus, information validation for these two sets of data had to be done at a later stage.

Psychological Challenges

The politically unstable environment created psychological challenges. First, given the political volatility, both researcher and researched likely came to the interview with each carrying their own baggage of fears and prejudices that may have impeded an unbiased approach. The researcher needs to enter the research field with as much openness as possible (Britten, 2008). Moving around the disembedded environments implied a somewhat persistent, subliminal threat. As I drove out into the field each day, particularly in the direction where I had been harassed, I was uncomfortably conscious of danger. There is the possibility that this fear probably impacted on the data gathering. Second, throughout the interviews I battled with trying to avoid getting deeply engaged and moved by participants' dilemmas from listening to their political violence related experiences. Bunio (2008) notes that sometimes the qualitative researcher is met with particularly difficult situations and there is a tendency of transforming the research interview into a therapeutic one. There is no evident rule to deal with issues of emotional engagement with participant dilemmas during fieldwork, but the researcher has to face such problems Silverman (2007). However, keeping in mind my motives for conducting the specific fieldwork, as Silverman advises, enabled some emotional distance to enhance space for critical analysis.

Third, back home at night after fieldwork, while making researcher diary entries, apart from the anxieties, frustrations, feelings of fear and uncertainty accompanying the entire fieldwork in such circumstances, I would battle with the basic questions such as, “what constitutes a good interview?,” “was this a good interview?” and “what would I have done differently?” As the circumstances shaping data gathering were in continuous flux, this tended to shape my reflections on these interviews and most of the time I felt they were not good enough. I felt that the interview data lacked detail. However, informed by Oettler (2008) that “failed” interviews do not obstruct the research process, but may instead accelerate it, this was enough consolation. Oettler adds that an interview that might qualify as “not good” at first glance might nevertheless contain “typical” or even “untypical” statements the researcher might be searching for. No matter how short or implausible interview accounts may be, they may nevertheless contain some core discursive fragments (Oettler, 2008). These interview accounts had to be viewed in the context of the prevailing political atmosphere.

Having provided a description of the challenges and experiences of data gathering, the next section discusses how the data were analysed.

Data Analysis

Data analysis, according to Benard (1994) refers to “... searching for patterns and ideas that help to explain the existence of those patterns” (p. 360). Practically it involves systematically examining and arranging field notes, interview scripts and all the materials gathered in the field, organizing and synthesizing them into manageable units. I adopted two approaches of interpreting the data, namely: in-field analysis and post data generation analysis (Britten, 2008). Due to the increasingly swelling nature of qualitative data, in-field analysis commenced on the first day of fieldwork and proceeded throughout the data generation as a guide for the process. The post data generation analysis constituted the main data analysis phase that was undertaken upon completion of capturing all data to enable a full picture to emerge. In-field analysis was informed by ideas from Gomm (2004) who contends that ongoing data generation analysis places the researcher in good stead, after the field work, ready for the post data generation analysis phase. The analytic

questions (addressing what they did, how, why, when and with whom) that I developed as I gathered data provided pointers to my initial focus areas to enable amendments and refining. This analytic question approach shaped the interviews and document reviews, thus feeding into my entire data generation process.

Given the interview approach adopted for the study, during the in-field analysis of interview data, a generative approach was adopted in the sense that data gathered during the first interview pointed to areas of focus for interview two, and interview two suggested areas of emphasis during the third interview. This draws on Kvale's (1996) notion of 'quality of craftsmanship' which implies that effective research involves continual process of reflecting, interrogating and analysing the data collected. Gomm (2004) emphasizes reflective comments on ideas being generated during data gathering sessions and summaries of what may seemingly be emerging. Such reflections constituted my own thoughts, feelings, impressions, insights and observations. I used reflections to connect incidents occurring during the process and I found summaries useful to create links between comments and impressions. These memos enabled further reflections on issues raised by participants and, their links and connections.

After all data had been generated, main post data generation analysis commenced, which was achieved through six interrelated stages involving organizing information and identifying patterns, developing ideas and drawing conclusions (Cohen & Manion, 1989; Maree, 2007). The stages are summarized below. The first stage involved transcribing data verbatim from tapes into typed prose. Personally engaging in this activity not only provided a worthwhile experience, but also familiarised me with the data sooner to understand emerging themes. All transcriptions were confirmed for accuracy and comprehensiveness in capturing the essence by participants what Maree (2007) calls 'member checking'.

Stage 2, bracketing, reduction and listening involved reading through all data to obtain a general sense and reflect on its overall meaning (Cohen & Manion, 1989). This stage required me to set aside my own perceptions, meanings and interpretations to immerse

myself in the interviews to understand what the interviewee was saying rather than what I would expect to hear. This is expressed by Benard as “getting into the world of participants” (1994: 365). I listened carefully to the entire tapes over and over again to get a sense of the whole, and reading and re-reading transcriptions several times to create a context for the emergence of specific themes and meanings at a later stage of the analysis.

Step 3 involved delineating categories of meaning through open coding, which Flick (2006) refers to as crystallization and condensation of what the participant has said using participants’ literal words. Coding involved organizing material into segments of text before bringing meaning to information (Cresswell, 2008). This involved taking text data, segmenting sentences into categories and labelling those categories with a term often in the actual language of the participant, which Cresswell calls an ‘*in vivo*’ term. The stage required examining transcript by transcript, asking the question ‘what is this about?’ (Cresswell, 2008). I was not considering substance but only the underlying meaning and recording that in the right hand margin. This necessitated having a much wider margin on the right hand. After working through all transcripts for Interview 1, I listed all the ideas (underlying meanings) and clustered together the similar topics into major topics, unique topics and outliers. I then referred back to my data abbreviating the topics as codes and writing the code next to a segment in the text.

The 4th step was to produce the descriptive wording for the topics or categories and to reduce the list by grouping related ones. After grouping these categories of general meaning, they needed reduction to categories of relevant meaning (Cohen & Manion, 1989) i.e. relevant to the key question. Clearly, unneeded information was eliminated by carefully going through and checking the units of relevant meaning, and looking for some concepts that described related observations. I then scrutinized categories to determine the naturally clustering ones and whether there was a common theme uniting the discrete units together. As expressed by Arksey and Knight (1999:168) “... try reading to see whether something is as common or as rare as it seems.” I scrutinized again for distinctness of themes or whether splitting was necessary. At this stage Cohen, Manion et al. (2000) and Flick (2006) suggest involvement of independent judges to verify categories of relevant

meaning. My supervisor provided that critical friend perspective to identify errors and omissions.

Stage 5 which Cohen and Manion (1989) label ‘determining themes and summarizing’ required scrutinizing categories of relevant meaning to determine central themes peculiar in these categories, which would express the essence of the cluster. Singleton and Straits (1999) advise that the researcher needs to modify themes and summarize with the subsequent interview data. Drawing on this, I modified and summarized the themes together with the second and third interview data and data from document reviews. This provided a holistic examination, so as to modify and add any other themes as necessary. The examination enabled identification of the general and unique themes for all the interviews and document reviews and indicated a need for a fourth interview with some participants to follow-up on issues. Singleton and Straits (1999) talk of contextualization of themes and summary as the last step. At this final stage, I repositioned themes in their overall contexts from where they emerged to see the relationships. This enabled me to determine whether the analysis could be put together into a story linked to the picture in literature and the propositions advanced. I now needed to summarize all interviews, precisely capturing the essence of professional development experiences of the PUPTs and conclude by describing the world as seen by participants (Cohen and Manion, 1989). The stage required providing a rich description of the PUPTs’ professional development experiences in their terms, as Singleton and Straits (1999:349) say, “...capturing in their language and letting them speak for themselves.”

This section has described how the data were analysed throughout the data generation process and after it was complete, the next section presents a description of the steps followed to gain entry into the research sites.

Gaining Access

Bassey (1999) defines gaining access as involving obtaining both official and social authority to conduct research. He describes obtaining official authority as when the gatekeepers in a given organisational unit concede the go-ahead to carry out research in the

organisation. Social permission refers to granting the necessary consent and rapport to the researcher by participants, which facilitate smooth conduct of the research. Bogdan and Biklen (1999) allude to the use of covert and overt approaches to gaining entry. The covert strategy involves masking from stakeholders one's interest in the research process, while overt refers to clearly announcing one's interest in search of rapport and support of the gatekeepers and participants. I adopted the overt approach.

As the study involved obtaining data from serving teachers in schools, authority was sought at three office levels on the Zimbabwean side. First, the responsible authority – Ministry of Education and Culture at the national office in Harare needed to consent. I was granted such authority (See Appendix 2). Further permission was required by the provincial education directorate; under the Provincial Education Director (PED) the highest provincial education officer, under whose jurisdiction all schools in the province fall. I presented the letter from the national office to the PED who in turn gave authority through another letter (See Appendix 3). Third, permission from the schools heads had to be sought and, this also required the PED's letter of permission to the respective school heads. It was mandatory that school heads ask for such a letter to safeguard themselves against reprimand from their superiors. These visits to the schools are what Hofmeyer and Scott (2007) see as vital in open and democratic research where participants' institutions must give their consent. In this regard, they must be consulted and must agree.

To meet the need for social permission Bogdan and Biklen (1992) refer to courting one's potential subjects, and arrival at the research sites with written permission from the provincial office is likely to create positive responses. These scholars add that regardless of the official permission, the researcher may still meet some reluctance to participate by the researched. Thus it was critical to build a solid foundation for rapport with participants to enhance support and cooperation. To gain such social entry, I visited each of the eight schools, where I met first the school head and then the teacher. To 'court' them, I explained my study, answering such questions as who, why, how, for whom and to what end and subsequently handed over consent requests as well as the letter from the PED.

As an educationist generally known to most of them, it was not difficult to engage them in

current educational issues related to teacher education inclusive of those directly related to my study, such as professional development, resourcing, the community support and other general education provision issues given the economic situation then prevailing in the country. These informal discussions yielded a lot of valuable information and seemingly most of these heads of schools had lots of experiences to share but often did not have an audience for their ideas and experiences. At the end of these informal interactions I was convinced that both heads and participants viewed my study on professional development of teachers in rural schools as worthwhile.

On the SA side, gaining entry into these schools required me to obtain initial clearance internally from the University's Higher Degrees committee and subsequently acquire authority and consent externally from the DoE. The DoE authority would be in the form of an Ethical Clearance (EC) Certificate to which letters addressed to the different research sites would be appended. Having submitted an application to the university research office, they assumed the responsibility to see the application through the Higher Degrees Committee to the DoE and to maintain constant liaison and follow-up with DoE to ensure speedy release of the Ethical Clearance Certificate. My initial application for the Ethical Clearance was submitted at the end of February 2008. For some reason the certificate was not released and six months down the line. I had the feeling that the application forms had been misplaced. Meanwhile I needed to be engaging with data generation. This required re-submission of application forms, which I did in September 2008. With full knowledge that I had applied, the Faculty research office requested a provisional EC to enable data generation. It was on the strength of this document that I was able to visit the schools and gain social entry through courting both principals and participants.

Due to limited familiarity with the SA milieu in which I was to be researching, I took advantage of and joined lecturers going on teaching practice supervision visits. Apart from wanting to 'court' these stakeholders, the visits turned out to be threefold in purpose: to see the schools and develop an idea of their locale; meet the participants, discuss my study, seek consent; and engage them in some informal discussions about SA education provision. Unlike the Zimbabwean heads, the South African principals neither volunteered

information nor provided elaborate answers to my questions, as a result the informal discussions were very brief. Conversely, the principals wanted to talk about Zimbabwe rather than their education scenario that was the target. Consequently, the discussions with school leaders did not yield much in the majority of cases. Substantial information was, however obtained from the study participants. Of the initial eleven participants that I had anticipated working with (See Sampling), I was able to visit ten at their schools, the eleventh one could not take the appointment as he was on leave at the time. I then decided to catalogue him together with another two as pilot participants.

This section has provided detail regarding accessing participants the following section narrates attempts made to enhance rigour throughout the enquiry.

Trustworthiness and Transferability of Findings

Validity is critical to effective research as it relates to ‘worthwhileness’, the quality of the research and the degree to which the research can justifiably claim to be accurate in representing the phenomenon under exploration. Its absence may render research efforts futile (Cohen, Manion et al., 2000). Given the qualitative framing of this study and engagement with the professional development experiences of this small group of participants, I would not attempt to prove reliability or generalizability of my findings. Given the sample size and sampling design adopted for the study, it would be unrealistic to claim that if this study were to be carried out with similar participants in similar contexts however defined, similar results would be found or that the conclusions arrived at would be generalizable to other contexts.

In qualitative research discourse, one refers to the notion of credibility, trustworthiness and transferability as opposed to validity. Issues of honesty, depth, richness, scope of data, nature of participants, triangulation and researcher interest have all been central to addressing transferability and trustworthiness in qualitative research (Delamont, 1992; Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Thomson (2008) identifies two aspects of rigour as critical to qualitative research that are relevant to my study: internal rigour and scientific rigour. Internal rigour is the nature and depth of descriptions presented by the researcher as precise

evidence of participants' experiences. Production of thick descriptions is the desired objective but Thomson hastens to warn that "not all description is thick description ... quantity does not contribute to thickness" (2008:49). She posits that "writing thick description requires certain talent, a facility with words, and aesthetic sensitivity or at least the willingness to practice a skill that may not come naturally." Production of valid qualitative research therefore requires more than "a passing ease with words" (2008:50). This thesis provides an indicator of transferability and reasonably rich data for research consumers to determine the degree of transferability. The clear, detailed and thick in-depth data descriptions provided, enable readers to "... address twin issues of comparability and translatability" (Cohen & Manion, 2000:108) and decide whether findings could be transferrable. Drawing on this view, a detailed description of the setting was provided to make results more realistic and richer thereby adding to the validity of findings.

The aspect of 'scientific rigour' in Thomson's conception, summarizes the whole fundamental nature of methodological triangulation by being "methodical", and "systematic" (Thomson, 2008:50). In this study, I worked meticulously and in an organized and careful fashion and, consistently operated within well-defined and transparent guidelines. This helped to maintain a disciplined grasp of all aspects of the research. Thus, the triad: phenomenon, method and critical question, and the researcher, were balanced, but as the researcher I constantly withdrew from the process to reflect and examine deficiencies and limitations in the conduct of the research.

Singleton and Straits (1999) posit that triangles possess enormous strength in enabling extraordinary precision when measuring heights of mountains and astronomical distances. It is on this basis that triangulation possesses great strength in research. The 'between' methods approach fostered a methodological filter to increase depth and accuracy and at the same time reduce method-boundedness (Woods, 2006). Such an approach minimized bias and misrepresentation of my picture of reality under exploration thereby enhancing confidence that data generated were not mere relics of one specific method. Examining evidence from different sources and fusing it to develop a logical and rational justification for themes enabled data triangulation to foster claims of validity of this study. Consulting a range of people as peer de-briefers and external auditors in cohort seminars, and, the

supervisory meetings throughout development of this thesis ensured that my account resonated with other people. This strategy involving understanding beyond the researcher and invested in other people enhanced validity to this thesis.

Adding on to Thomson's (2008) notions of internal rigour and scientific rigour, scholars (Cresswell, 2008; Flick, 2006; Gomm, 2004; Woods, 2006) bring in issues of unobtrusiveness, member checking of texts, piloting the instrument, clarification of bias, discrepant information and prolonged field work as enhancing rigour. Cohen and Manion (2000) and Cresswell (2008) argue for member checking of transcriptions and final report or specific descriptions by participants for confirmation of accuracy. Claims to trustworthiness of data cannot be made unless texts generated by participants, e.g. interview transcripts, are confirmed, clarified and changed where necessary by the participants (Cohen & Manion, 1989). Other than member checking of raw transcriptions, participants in this study also read through summaries of categories and themes during the follow up fourth interviews.

Piloting generally refers to guiding along strange parts and dangerous places (Cresswell, 2008; Gomm, 2004). While the process of data generation may not be strange and risky, the unanticipated intricacies, twists and turns deserved exploration before plunging headlong into the thick of the enquiry (Seidman, 1998). Pilot testing of the interview schedule conducted with three participants was aimed at determining appropriateness of the research structure as envisioned and to get to grips with some practical aspects of interviewing. Further, gauging single interview duration and obtaining insights into the technical elements that did not speak to the key question could only be achieved through piloting (Seidman, 1998). Subsequently, I was able to step back and reflect, discuss with my supervisor and cohort peers, request for cross-checking and provision of the critical friend perspective before the instrument finally got to the field. This experience enabled revision and refinement of the approach to data generation, thereby enhancing rigour.

Complete unobtrusiveness in data generation may be difficult to achieve (Cohen, Manion et al., 2000). Not interrupting the participant as they speak fosters unobtrusiveness in data gathering (Seidman, 1998). Drawing on this view, I adopted a good listener stance, neither

interrupting nor redirecting their thinking while they developed their thoughts so that the thoughts and words remained truly theirs. The prolonged fieldwork provided me with an in-depth interpretation of the phenomenon under exploration and conveyed detail on the site and the people to enhance credibility to the narrated accounts (Cresswell, 2008). The Three-interview series approach adopted for the study required a prolonged period of fieldwork and this extended my experience with participants, which, as Cresswell notes, lends more accurate and valid findings.

Qualitative research affirms the role of the human interviewer as the human instrument. Guba and Lincoln (1985) assert that instead of lamenting that the non-human instruments employed in data gathering affect the process, the human instrument is described as, "... a marvellously smart, adaptable, flexible instrument who can respond to situations with skill, tact and understanding" (p.107). As the major instrument for data elicitation, interpretation and analysis, my biases and values were declared openly (see Personal Context) through a self-reflection that gave an open and honest narrative, which will hopefully resonate well with readers. Through this study, I am trying to understand the PUPTs' biases by exploring their experiences and conceptions of their professional development. Another dimension of being a 'smart human instrument' is the ability to work with my own biases as well as biases of the participants. Real-life is composed of diverse perspectives and tensions hence discussing contradictory information adds to the credibility of an account (Engestrom & Miettinen, 2004). Discussions around themes and sub-themes in this enquiry presented contradictory evidence, this makes the account more realistic and rigorous.

Issues discussed above illustrate attempts made to enable sufficient degree of confidence in credibility, trustworthiness and dependability of findings. Notwithstanding, the research design was limited in some ways.

Limitations of the Study

It must be acknowledged that the study was dealing with a widely dispersed population and such distribution would involuntarily leave out essentially information-rich members of the two populations. This dispersion coupled with remoteness of some rural schools is likely to

have deprived the researcher of vital information. The researcher, however, tried to extract participants from schools that were at least 40 kilometres from a town.

Limited transferability of findings due to the paradigmatic location of the study poses another limitation. Transferability would therefore be considered on the understanding that findings may be limited only to similar specific groups, communities and /or circumstances (Cresswell, 2008). However, given that the decision will be left to the researcher and reader to confirm findings based on their understanding and experiences, the strength of the findings from this case study lies in the fact that the study involved two distinct national contexts.

Further, researcher attitudes and opinions, coupled with tendencies to view participants in own image or even to seek answers subscribing to own notions and beliefs may have affected the findings. Researcher misperceptions on given answers or misunderstandings of participants' answers may impact on research findings (Soltis, 1989). An effort was made to bracket my own notions and pre-conceived ideas and to be open minded, following up on questions to get accurate information and clarifications. Further, the researcher's own axiological assumptions and experiences were declared.

Transcription of data was neither neutral nor value free. What passed from the transcription to into the document was a result of what should go there, the researcher's decision and choice. Throughout data analysis, value based decisions were being made. Further the epistemological stance of the design clearly implies the presence of values and biases given that the data is experiential and subjective in nature (Cohen, Manion et al., 2000).

My direct involvement with the institutions may have resulted in restraint in the way in which participants discussed the universities. In that sense, the absence of significant discussion about the impact of the university courses noted might suggest some sense of discomfort on the participants to raise such issues. While I could not detach myself from my connections with the institutions, this is only speculative.

Conclusion

The chapter has described the ethical considerations and the qualitative research paradigm adopted for this study. As a naturalistic strategy, the qualitative paradigm was appropriate as the study sought to explore teachers' experiences of professional development. This chapter illustrated that the study employed a multi-mode approach to data generation and that this was a double site study involving two distinct international groups of teachers. The multi-mode strategy is in accordance with qualitative traditions and their strengths that lie in triangulation. Also, in keeping with the qualitative approaches, the chapter has described how the data were analysed both in fieldwork as well as after the fieldwork.

Thus, having provided an account of the research design and methodology explaining the what, how, why, when and where during the research journey, the next chapter presents a description and analysis of the research setting.

Chapter 6

The Research Setting

Introduction

The aim of the study was to develop an understanding of professional development experiences of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools through exploring the ways in which the teachers engage in professional development practices in these rural school contexts. This chapter presents a description of the setting in which the study was conducted. Such a description is essential to ensure a clearer understanding of the context from where data were generated, analysed and explained. The chapter commences with a brief analysis of the history and development of the PGCE and PGDE programmes in which the PUPTs were enrolled. These programmes were critical for providing a vehicle for identifying research participants, and discussing the programmes provides a springboard for understanding their professional development experiences of these teachers. Following, is a description of each of the school sites where the teachers were practicing. A discussion on the push and pull factors into the teaching profession, as well as for their reasons for embarking on the professional programmes are discussed. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the PUPTs' visions. The following section therefore describes the UKZN PGCE part-time mixed mode programme.

The PGCE Part-time/Mixed Mode Programme at UKZN

The UKZN PGCE emerged out of a long history of SA universities' offerings of a one-year post-graduate course. For decades universities offered the professional postgraduate programme assuming different titles for different periods: University Education Diploma (UED), Higher Education Diploma (HED) and Higher Diploma in Education (HDE). Teachers were either trained through this route or in colleges in a range of diploma and certificate programmes, but generally the focus at university level was on relatively small

intensive training of graduates. The post-apartheid period saw the progressive re-alignment of these systems into a single system located in Higher Education.

Higher Education process of restructuring resulted in a series of other processes including the launch of the materials-based PGCE programme in 2000, and subsequently the launch of a similar programme at the Edgewood campus in 2002 (UKZN, 2006). UKZN PGCE programme was a generic qualification, catering for three phases namely: PGCE (FET), PGCE (FET/GET: Senior Phase), and PGCE (GET: Senior Phase). Thus, there were no separate qualifications for any of the specializations. The programme was therefore registered as a single generic qualification on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) (UKZN, 2006). This part-time/mixed mode programme was for a two-year period, apparently designed to cater for teachers practicing in schools within and around Pietermaritzburg and Durban. Contact sessions were organized on weekdays in the late afternoon from 15h30 to 18h00. However, some students travelled long distances to get to the university. As these students were usually registered for two modules per semester, this implied that they travelled to attend twice a week.

The university school experience session was approximately eight weeks during the entire duration of the programme, broken up into two four-week sessions during the second and final semesters. During this period, the university expected the PUPTs to work under a mentor teacher appointed by a School Liaison Mentor (SLM) who was the link teacher between the university and the school. Appointment of the SLM was the responsibility of the principal, and the SLM attended the mentor training workshops organized by the university (UKZN, 2006). He/she was responsible for identifying and appointing staff, in conjunction with the principal to serve as mentor teachers and to ensure appropriate and effective mentoring (UKZN, 2008). The mentor teacher on the other hand was expected to provide supervisory support through lesson observations and assessment, and formally reporting on the PUPT to the university through three formative reports and one overall summative report during each of the two university school experience sessions. Development of such in-school structures required close liaison and monitoring by the

university from inception throughout delivery to ensure existence and effectiveness. Southworth and Campbell (1992), Kelchtemans and Ballet (2002) and McLaughlin (2008) emphasize the importance of supportive collaborative environments and structures to enable effective mentoring supervisory support.

The PUPTs also received university teaching practice supervisory support during this period. Supervisory school visits were on appointment and each student was visited at least three times for observation and support. Having provided a synopsis of the UKZN PGCE programme, the next section describes the ZOU PGDE programme.

The PGDE Distance Education Programme at ZOU

This section describes the ZOU PGDE programme providing a brief history, the nature of the programme and school experience. Chapter 2 indicated that democratisation of education on attainment of Independence in Zimbabwe in 1980 resulted in massive expansion of the education system, the construction of new rural secondary schools and swelling numbers of PUPTs in these rural secondary settings. Thus, this ZOU school-based distance education programme was a response to national needs for qualified graduate teachers. The ZOU realized that alone they could not develop teachers, so the school emerged as the best place through the distance education strategy. Educational, pragmatic and economic forces shaped the ZOU PGDE philosophy. The mission of ZOU from its inception was “... to bring education to the doorstep of every individual...”(ZOU, 2000:2). Thus, the ZOU mode advocated for learning to teach through the practice of teaching under the guidance and supervision of experienced, school-based, practicing teachers. Further, two important issues also informed ZOU. First was the notion of directly responding to identified national needs and challenges in the rural secondary schools sector, which would reduce the number of unqualified temporary teachers. Second, these PUPTs were offering a critical service, in a critical area: teaching in the newly opened rural secondary schools. Withdrawing them from this sector and channelling them into full-time teacher education programmes would give rise to huge national economic and social challenges.

The duration of the ZOU PGDE programme was three semesters (18 months). ZOU PGDE was a generic single qualification within the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education. Graduates were eligible for teaching across all secondary sector levels but specifically prepared for senior level classes (Form 5 –6, the equivalent of the SA Grade 12). As the teachers were trained '*in situ*', they remained at their schools working under a mentor and receiving day-to-day tutorship, on the spot guidance, support and supervision, and overall nurturing of their professional development for the entire programme duration. The main medium of instruction was through specially printed materials complemented by fifteen hours of face-to-face, non-compulsory tuition per course undertaken primarily at the university regional centres and sometimes in the district centres. This fulfilled the ZOU mission; "...to educate university graduates to become qualified teachers while at work. ... taking teacher education back to the schools and classrooms..." (ZOU, 2000:2). Lewin, Samuel et al. (2003) allude to the notion of school-based training, where trainees are based in their schools and only go out to campus for academic and professional training sessions.

School experience lasted for the entire duration of the programme and was examined through continuous assessment. Teaching practice commenced with demonstration lessons by experienced teachers at nearby schools during face-to-face sessions in the first semester. These were video recorded and used as springboard for discussion. Subsequently, the PUPTs conducted peer and micro teaching sessions followed by whole group critiquing and discussion. Such activities were intended to place the PUPT on course before assessment observations in subsequent semesters. Both the mentor and the university observed and reported on the PUPT twice a semester during the second and third semesters. Mentor observations ideally were carried out prior to lecturer observations to build mentee confidence. The mentor and lecturer marks were synthesized to produce a semester mark. Mentor selection was the responsibility of the school head in conjunction with the university, which stipulated the criteria. Both the mentor and the head attended mentor training offered by the university.

This section has shed light on the PGCE and PGDE programmes in terms of their development, structure and school experience support. The next section describes the

contexts in which professional development experiences were occurring. The choice to provide descriptive data in this chapter without any analysis was informed by the fact that the information on school sites is an extension of the methodology chapter.

The School Contexts

The Zimbabwean School Sites

Introduction

Given the complexity in defining the concept rural, this study understands ruralness from a Zimbabwean perspective as referring to those areas located 50 kilometres from a city or town. As indicated in Chapter 3, these settings comprise sparsely populated, open country sites, in agricultural contexts and generally with forest environments. They are not defined as urban and fall under traditional governance systems of the chiefs (Ishe/Nkosi).

Residences comprise thickly settled villages with thatched roof over pole and 'daga'. Such houses are constructed of poles that are held together by mud. In some cases homesteads of brick under zinc or asbestos sheeting are sparsely dotted amongst the thatched roofs.

About 500 metres from the homesteads are large tracts of farming land juxtaposed with grazing areas. Inhabitants rely on subsistence farming and in good agricultural seasons, can provide their families with enough to eat and surplus to generate income for their children's education. But in many cases farming land is unproductive, usually sandy. This is a legacy of the colonial rule. The colonial name for such areas was 'tribal trust land' or 'reserves' - both terms signify some derelict land assigned by white colonial 'masters' but not owned by the black population (Chikoko, 2006). The economic base for these people allows them to provide for the basic needs. While the levels of education would be defined as low, the majority can read and write in their indigenous languages. They understand the spoken official language, English, albeit they may not be able to communicate in it. Given the economic base and the level of education, they are aware of the value of education and are often very supportive of their local schools and the learning of their children.

Secondary schools, which are often severely under-resourced, are centrally located and within walking distance from the homes. The furthest schools are usually about eight kilometres away. Opening of primary and secondary schools within walking distances of all children was one of the several strategies adopted to put into operation the massive education expansion policy introduced at Independence (Chikoko, 2006). In the vicinity of the secondary school would be a feeder primary school. The schools are often well constructed with brick under asbestos and on spacious land. Within the school premises is the teachers' compound, comprising houses of at least two bedrooms each. Consequently teachers in these schools do not commute to work.

These areas are generally marked by poor geographical landscape with undeveloped and/or poorly maintained gravel roads, and are severely constrained in terms of physical infrastructures. There is no electricity, telephone facilities, or piped water. As a result, access to communication and information technology facilities is nonexistent. The government Rural Electrification Programme intended to benefit these communities is still a long way from reality. Drinking water is drawn either from wells or boreholes and water for other purposes is drawn from perennial streams usually in very close vicinity. The areas are inadequately serviced in terms of transport infrastructure. Most roads are gravel and in a poor state, serviced by a limited number of buses, consequently leaving commuters with long walking distances to the nearest bus station. The areas are inadequately provided for in terms of health, social and economic opportunities. Also evident is an absence of opportunities for life-long learning and recreational facilities. The Zimbabwean rural schools discussed in this study are located in such areas. The following section describes the policy context as it relates to these rural schools. There follows detailed descriptions of the schools.

The Policy Context

The Zimbabwe *Amendment of Education Act*, (9.1) classifies schools into two broad categories; government and non-government (Chikoko, 2006; Nhundu & Makoni, 1999; Zvobgo, 2007). The government schools are state owned and run. As a consequence of this ownership, government schools are usually well-resourced, big in terms of enrolment

with class sizes between 50 and 55 learners. Such schools are popular with the rural folk due to their subsidized fees. The non-government schools are owned and run by authorities such as town/city councils and rural district councils (RDC), missions, farmers and education trusts. The non-government organisations are identified as Responsible Authorities. RDCs represent the Ministry of Local Government at the local and provincial levels and through these councils the ministry claims ownership of the largest number of schools in Zimbabwe, given that 80% of the black population lives in rural areas, consequently most schools are located in rural districts (Chikoko, 2006; Government, 2006). The school sites used in this study comprised both government and non-government schools.

While ownership may vary, all school activities are certified by the Ministry of Education and Culture, represented by the Provincial Education Directorate at provincial level and administered by the Provincial Education Director (PED). Within each province the schools are divided into districts and further subdivided into clusters that are capacity-building structures intended to foster teacher professional development within that cluster. Four or five secondary schools constitute a cluster depending on their proximity from each other within the district. While individual schools are accountable to their cluster for enacting agreed upon staff development activities, individual schools are accountable for the organization and mounting of day-to-day staff /professional development for their staff.

The following section discusses in some detail the sites for the professional development experiences of these PUPTs.

The Schools

Six schools were used as research sites in Zimbabwe. These schools have been labelled Zim School 1 to 6 in the study. It must be noted that the numbering has no ranking connotations but is used for purposes of identification and confidentiality. The same numbering is maintained to correspond with labels used to identify participants as Zim Teacher 1 to 6. Of these six schools, one was government owned and five were non-government. The picture in terms of the responsible authority was as follows: two mission

schools, three RDC schools and one government school. The descriptive details of each school are provided below. A detailed description of each site was considered necessary for assessing possibilities for professional development support for these PUPTs. The data on the sites was generated through informal discussions with the school head/deputy and from other teachers during the interim visits intended to establish rapport with the schools and participants. My own knowledge of these schools acquired through teaching practice supervision visits as a ZOU lecturer prior to engaging on the PhD programme also provided a source of information. However, more information was generated from the research participants through the interviews. The findings from these discussions are detailed below, but tabulated information on each school is provided in Appendix 9.

Zim School 1

Zim School 1 is a mission school, one of the oldest Catholic Mission Schools in the province, established well before Zimbabwe's 1980 Independence. The school earned a great reputation for outstanding Cambridge O and A Level examinations results during the colonial period and retained this prestigious status. It was an all-girls boarding school that graduated several outstanding women leaders. However, due to the massification of the education system after independence, the school opened doors to both boys and girls, but only girls are resident on campus, as the boarding facilities were meant to cater for females only.

The school is located approximately 87 kilometres from Masvingo town, the provincial capital. The road is tarred all through except the nine kilometres off the Highway to the growth point. At the time of data generation, getting through this nine-kilometre stretch was a nightmare due to the absence of road maintenance service. The school is electrified and there is piped water as well as an earth telephone line. However, at the time of data generation, the earth line had not been working for more than six months. Reports had been made to the responsible service provider but due to problems of imported spare parts and accessories and the general absence of foreign currency in the country, it had not been possible to have the telephone service reinstated.

Staff, including the head, relied on cellphones, but the network was not accessible at all points beyond a given radius from town and consequently cell coverage was not available at all points within the school. The Head intimated that he had made arrangements with the Diocese (the responsible authority) on the times to receive or make calls upon which he would be within that spot to make or receive calls: “they know when to call me, yes, we agreed otherwise it is difficult to get in touch with us out here” (Head Zim School 1).

Within the Mission station there was a preschool, a clinic, a training school for Catholic Priests, a monastery, a convent and a mission farm. In good years in terms of rains, the farm produces enough for boarding consumption and for sale to staff at subsidized prices. The staff compound was close by and houses were shared for unmarried teachers with at least three spacious bedrooms each. Given this situation, teacher relations extended beyond academic and professional relations to neighbourliness.

The school offered up to ‘A’ Level and enrolment at the time stood at about 1100 with a staff compliment of 26 teachers. The lower classes (Form 1 to Form 4) had five classes each. Class sizes were between 40 and 45. Over the years the school has retained its prestigious reputation for quality education based on the ‘O’ and ‘A’ Level examination results. The school practiced ability streaming as pointed out by Zim Teacher 1.

...General streaming according to Grade 7 results but when pupils go for Form 3 they are now screened further, they are put into ability groups or ability classes... Looking at the type of classes that we have it means one group of classes doing very well and the other group not performing very well, for example in Form 4, Form 4D's and 4E's, doing quite well and at the same time the other 3 classes not working so hard ...

The level of education in this community was reasonable. A few parents could read, write and communicate in English, the official language, however, the majority could only read and write in their mother tongue. The teacher attributed these literacy levels to the work of the church. “...It’s a Catholic community and most of our students are Catholics from Catholic families in this community and beyond.” The community around lived on peasant farming and with good rains they did not struggle to provide for their children’s education. The boarder parents were generally working people with a high level of education, and

notwithstanding the numerous economic problems the country was facing at the time of this study, these people earned enough to provide for their family needs. Hence, given the type of parents in this school context, problems of financial support from parents to meet school needs were unlikely. The entire parental body was very supportive of the school and the education of their children. They always met and discussed performance of their children with staff during open and consultation days as confirmed by Zim Teacher 1.

Ja, we discuss children's progress with parents. We have an open day or consultation once a year where we meet parents. They come to look at their children's books. Yes, most of the parents are supportive, they are eager to know the performance of their kids. They go to the extent of asking, are you not through with marking the mid-year exams, or this and that.

Resource provision was generally good. There was a library with good stocks of relevant books. However, here and there the school was also purchasing some books because in other areas certain texts were inadequate especially in 'O' Level and 'A' Level. The school had acquired a few computers for both staff and students to acquire basic computer skills and an Overhead Projector. There were three science laboratories: a junior, middle and senior lab. Classrooms were adequate and spacious with a teachers' office included. Most of the offices were shared, but Teacher 1 did not share, as he was HoD. The office was spacious with fitted shelves where stacks of marked exercise books were neatly arranged. The books had been submitted by the teachers in the department for supervision by the HoD.

In terms of discipline, there appeared to be no problems. This was a disciplined school due to its history and influence of the church.

The school set-up is so disciplined; students are highly disciplined because discipline is part of the motto of the school. So there are no problems. It's a disciplined school and the pupils also are disciplined a lot, though in my absence pupils could make noise but there are no discipline problems (Zim Teacher 1).

However, due to the old established reputation and sound resource provision, notwithstanding the distance from the highway, the school provided an attractive location to many teachers seeking teaching posts. Seven teachers at this mission school, inclusive of

the Head and his Deputy, were pursuing different degrees. From my discussion with the Deputy, (one of my former PGDE students) two priests were also reading for degrees. The culture of studying in this institution created fertile ground for professional development.

Zim School 2

Zim School 2 was a Rural Day Secondary School constructed after independence, around 1988-89. Labels such as Rural Day Secondary School and Rural Government Secondary School were coined immediately after independence to denote the “new” schools that were opened when the Independent Zimbabwe Government took over in 1980 and introduced massive educational expansion. The school was a few steps (less than 20 metres) off the main highway to Harare. Notwithstanding other factors, the school provided a convenient teaching location for teacher deployment due to its proximity to and distance from Masvingo town - approximately 50 kilometres. The school had piped water supply, but was not electrified, nor did it have a telephone line. Zim Teacher 1 in her comments indicated that it was not even possible to use the cellphones as network was never accessible within this area.

The school does not have a telephone and a few of us have cellphones but we only use them when we go to town in most cases as you know with networks in Zimbabwe. Sometimes we do not even see the need for it, you sometimes forget you have it unless you go to those bushes there... (pointing East).

The electricity power and telephone lines passed through the school along the highway. However, at the time of data generation, neither the school nor the parents’ body had the capacity to harness enough funds either to electrify the school or connect it to the running telephone line, almost twenty years after construction of the school. This was evidence of the poverty level within the local community.

The school was under the RDC and located in a Small Scale Farming area. Such areas were owned by black farmers for small-scale commercial farming as opposed to the ‘tribal trust land’ or ‘reserves’, which were entrusted by the white colonial government to the blacks. While one would be inclined to think that in a purchased farming area of this nature the community would be well placed to live a reasonable life and to provide for their

children's education, the situation was different in this community. This was a poor community mainly due to the sandy and unproductive soils. The farmers were not yielding much from those plots even in good rains. This scenario points to the inequalities in land distribution during the colonial rule. The level of education in this community was reasonable, given that most parents could understand simple spoken English and were able to read and write in their mother tongue. This would be attributed to the work of the Catholic Church that had its mission station about 30 kilometres away. What was encouraging was that these poor parents were showing a considerable amount of support for the education of their children as Zim Teacher 2 asserted:

To some extent, the fact that they provide for their children, exercise books well I would say they are supportive, but at times I do not see much of the support. We do not have many parents who come in the school maybe to ask for the progress of their children. Very rarely do we have them just coming, but when we call them, yes they come.

In terms of size, this was a small school with an enrolment of between 600-700 students and with a staff compliment of 23 teachers inclusive of the head and deputy. The school offered up to 'O' Level. Class sizes were between 40 and 45 students and the general learning infrastructures were adequate. However, there was no teacher office space except the staffroom. At the time of data generation, Zim Teacher 2 had been allocated to some space in the administration block, then under construction as an office due to her added responsibility as the school counsellor. She made this comment:

There are no offices for most of staff, this little one I use is not even meant to be an office, but you see, the admin block is still under construction so what I am using is actually a toilet for the admin block when its eventually completed, otherwise Ja!

The school was severely under-resourced. There was neither a library nor a science laboratory. Although this question did not come up during my discussions with the head, deputy and even with the participant, I am left wondering at the type of science the students were exposed to given that science was a core and compulsory subject in the Zimbabwean Secondary school curriculum. This, in my view, limited students, particularly those who wanted to pursue science subjects at 'A' level and beyond. The teachers were struggling to ensure that they present effective lessons through their own initiative and

agency. It is likely that parents were probably finding it difficult to raise money for school fees, money for the construction which was ongoing and for various levies for the purchase of the needed books and resources all at the same time, considering their economic base and the situation that had prevailed for a number of years in Zimbabwe.

Zim School 3

Zim School 3 was a Rural Day Secondary School run and owned by Government. This was a very big school, put up in the early 1980s. The school was about 52 kilometres from Masvingo and located in peasant farming tribal trust land. As a government school however, fees were heavily subsidized and the government normally provided for the bulk of resources. Given this scenario, school enrolment was high and classes were big.

One positive feature of this area was that the farming land was productive with rich soils, and in a good agricultural season the community would reap enough to eat and have excess to sell. Literacy levels were good given that there was a mission station about 30 kilometres away belonging to the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (RCZ). Hence, most parents could read and write in their mother tongue and some could speak English. Given their economic base and their level of education, this community was economically well placed for financial contribution to the school.

More than half the road to the school was bad gravel and part of it was inaccessible by car, thus requiring foot access to get to the school. Well built with asbestos on brick, Zim School 3 was constructed at the foot of a small hill and with a very spacious layout. At the time of data gathering there were, however, some signs of neglect as many windows had broken panes, some door handles were broken and floors in classrooms were broken and dusty. The school head intimated that the school had submitted several requisitions to the Ministry of Housing and Public Construction as the responsible office for the maintenance of public buildings. They had received neither positive response nor action from the said ministry, which had become incapacitated by financial limitations.

During data generation, the phone had not been working for more than a year following a lightning strike, and efforts to get the Posts and Telecommunications Department to restore services had been unsuccessful. The issue of imported spare parts in the absence of foreign currency had become a familiar echo to heads of institutions such as this one. Teachers could access the cellphone network in the evenings on particular trees or stones close to the township about 1 kilometre away. While the issue of cell communication did not come up during my chat with the deputy head, teachers indicated that such trees and stones were well known to all staff including the head. The school was, however, equipped with piped water supply and electricity, but my data gathering coincided with electricity power outages and the school had not had power for four days. This did not directly interfere with the conduct of lessons, but was challenging with regard to the preparation and marking carried out after work.

Zim School 3 was a very big school with an enrolment of over 1500 and a staff compliment of 33 teachers. All teachers assembled for tea and any announcements at 10:00 am in the staffroom. This time was a welcome break for the teachers as it fostered interaction and socialization among staff. The school had an eight-hour working day from 07h00 normally, and 06h30 on Monday and Wednesday when there was assembly before lessons. Their day ended at 16h00. There was no ability streaming in the school and class sizes were between 55 and 60 students. The school offered up to 'A' Level. The bigger classes were mainly in the junior forms, Forms 1 to 4. The infrastructure provided adequate floor space for learners and shared office space for teachers. HoDs and other staff on posts of responsibility had individual offices.

Structurally the school was well provided for with three laboratories for the junior, middle and senior classes respectively. The school had a library that was, however, not adequately stocked. While one expected adequate resourcing in this big, rural Day Government Secondary School, it was, in fact, just the opposite. Resource provision in Zimbabwean government schools would be ranked 3rd after private and mission schools. There was a serious shortage of resources as intimated by Zim Teacher 3:

The school is really under-resourced especially 'A' level textbooks. It's really a big problem, being a big government school we lack a lot of resources, five or six pupils to share a textbook. This tends to affect the way pupils read. We have access to important and relevant reference books but they are very few. Sometimes we have 2 texts making 30 pupils sharing one textbook, its not good.

Against this situation, teachers had to employ personal agency with the little available resources to ensure effective teaching/learning as he further highlighted:

In such cases we improvise, we try and use the old charts; we turn it up the other side and use. One chart ends up covering two topics. So we just have to be creative and improvise. We even use even our own personal resources to try secure some resources to benefit pupils so that at least we are able to do our work...

Given that everyone, including teachers, were struggling to put food on the table from their meagre salaries, I was left to wonder how much these teachers would sacrifice to benefit their learners. Teachers had also resorted to using cooperative strategies where students would share textbooks and other resources. Zim Teacher 3 further explained: "In most instances we assist and encourage each other in the department to use group work and when pupils finish they report back and the teacher then summarizes the main points from the pupils and put them on the board as notes ..."

Some able parents were purchasing individual copies for their children as further highlighted by Zim Teacher 3: "... some parents have procured textbooks for their children and we thank them for that support for their children's learning ...". Government schools like Zim School 3 were adequately stocked with books and other resources in the early 1980s when they were launched. Seemingly, however, no additional resources were supplied to these schools on expiry of the lifespan of the first consignments of resources, consequently creating serious shortages. The head mentioned that these schools continued to receive government aid to supplement parental efforts, but there was a mismatch between the cost of books and government input to realize any impact. Given the gravity of the economic challenges that the country was facing, it was very unlikely improvements in resource provision would be immediate.

The level of relational interdependency and agency among teachers was high and at the time of data generation, four teachers were studying and two of them were on PGDE. Notwithstanding the challenges emanating from under-resourcing, the environment in this school was seemingly conducive to teacher professional development. The enabling factors included the economic base and level of education of parents evidenced in support, teacher collaboration and interdependency and a learning-enriched environment.

School 4

Zim School 4 was established after Independence in 1980 and is located approximately 56 kilometres from Masvingo town and about one kilometre from the Highway to Mutare. The one kilometre gravel road to the school at the time of data generation was well maintained. Zim School 4 is a very big school, with an enrolment of about 1400 students and a staff team of 36. Class sizes were about 50 students each. The school offers boarding facilities to boys and girls from surrounding feeder schools and beyond. Day school provision is extended to children of mission employees. The school is spaciouly well built on red soils at the foot of a hill, but clearly visible from the highway. This is a well-maintained and very neat school though a few doors had broken handles, inclusive of the interview venue. Infrastructural space for learners and teachers is adequate albeit shared for those with no responsibilities.

On my interim visit to the school, I arrived at break time and many students were literally running back to residences for a cup of tea and a few minutes later they were back holding thick slices of bread. Zim School 4 was managing, I thought, given that they were able to provide students with tea and bread in an environment fraught with economic and social challenges in many respects. The school belongs to the Zion Christian Church (ZCC) of Zimbabwe and is therefore driven by the Zion Christian religious beliefs and traditions. Notwithstanding, enrolment does not only target ZCC religious orientations but also included children from other religions and traditions. Even if the school had wanted to discriminate against other religious orientations, this would raise an outcry, as it would be contrary to government policy of inclusion. The same goes for hiring of staff. However, all students are expected to observe the Zion Religious teachings and attend services as and

when scheduled. This attendance stipulation is in line with government policy. Driven by ZCC religious beliefs, their thrust is towards work and prayer to inculcate good moral values. Zim Teacher 4 explained:

Ja, its main thrust is to educate students as well as to inculcate moral values in them. It also hinges upon the need for the pupils to engage in practical activities that is agric, metal work, fashion and fabrics. So looking at the main things; to educate as well as to pray ... the praying aspect involves inculcation of moral values...

As a mission establishment, Zim School 4 has all the basic services and facilities; piped water, electricity and telephone facilities. At the time of data generation, the telephone had not been working for a long time after it had been damaged by lightning during the previous rainy season. The Deputy Head reported that they made fruitless efforts to get it repaired but it was, according to him, always issues to do with unavailability of spare parts. He mentioned that he had abandoned following up on this sincerely hoping that if a new government came into power things would improve. Zim Teacher 4 also pointed out:

We have all basic services, electricity, tap water and telephone but the telephone has not been repaired since last year when it broke down with lightning. Our cellphones of course you know there is no network here unless you go to some place outside this yard, we normally go to that tree there (pointing) and climb up, sometimes network is not there Ja, it's a problem. That's the difficult part and these days with so many social problems in families, people can't phone you, you can't phone them.

Students at this school are from 'middle class' families, teachers and lecturers, "Our students come from average families most of them are children of teachers and college lecturers" (Zim Teacher 4). The surrounding community is comprised of subsistence farmers, settled on small plots, apparently productive in a good agricultural year, given the type of soils. The community resident on the mission farm, are employed by the mission. Thus, in terms of the parents' and community's economic base, they are better placed to contribute to the resources and other school needs.

The location of the school, being fairly close to town and along a busy highway coupled with good resource provision, makes the school attractive for the existing teachers as well as those seeking deployment. The Deputy Head intimated that they were doing all they

could to assist their teachers and boost their morale by giving them food handouts. On my visit for interview one, teachers were receiving their two-weekly portions of basic groceries. Zim Teacher 4 added:

These days they supplement us with food handouts of the basics, mealie-meal, cooking oil, eggs, beef, soap, rice, sugar, etc. so we are basically happy here but other services you would find in town are of course not found here; library, movies and so forth. But we are taken care of here as you can see.

This gesture confirmed my earlier impression after observing students that the school seemed to have been on a sound footing economically. The school offers up to the 'A' Level qualification and at data generation, three teachers were reading for different degree qualifications and Zim Teacher 4 and three colleagues were on the PGDE programme. The Deputy Head was finalizing his MEd Thesis. The search for knowledge in this school was encouraging. Such was the academic scenario in which Zim Teacher 4 operated which in my view was a source of motivation and likely to foster professional development. This mission school is well resourced with adequate textbooks and other requisite resources, science laboratories (the junior, middle and senior labs), library and a computer laboratory with 15 computers for computer appreciation. Although there was a general economic meltdown in the country, the school always sourced teaching aids for the teachers and what was encouraging is that preference for issuing these was always given to 'student teachers', i.e. the PGDE students. Management acknowledged the need for these teachers to be adequately supported during their professional training, as they were still ill equipped with creativity and improvisation skills.

Ja we are provided with resources, they purchase charts, teaching aids, etc. But their priority is to give them to student teachers because we are the ones who are being assessed maybe on day-to-day basis, so the first priority is for student teachers. But it's not only student teachers, permanent teachers also use them. (Zim Teacher 4).

The school day started at 06h30 with assembly on Monday, Wednesday and Friday or preparation/study on Tuesday and Thursday and ended at 15h30, followed by extra-curricular activities or supervised study. Supplied with electricity and other facilities inclusive of good infrastructures and proximity to the highway, the school was centrally located in the cluster, consequently making it a suitable venue for cluster meetings. The

adequate resourcing, supportive school culture and practices as well as community support, all fostered professional development experiences for these PUPTs.

School 5

Zim School 5 was about 63 kilometres from Masvingo and 11 kilometres along a gravel road that branches off a busy highway to the Eastern Highlands. At the time of my visit to this school, the gravel road had deteriorated due to the absence of maintenance after the summer rains. No reliable public means of transport served this school in an environment where teachers and the community relied heavily on public transport. The community including teachers often walked these eleven kilometres to the highway.

The social setting of the community comprised of subsistence farmers with an unstable economic base. The land was unproductive and could not yield enough for the families' own consumption even in a good agricultural season. What was encouraging was that families practiced some menial market gardening though this apparently yielded very little. The community basically relied on handouts from organisations or children and relatives working in urban areas or in the diaspora for additional support. The poverty levels were evident in the school pupils, some of whom were walking barefoot and not clothed in neat school attire. Such levels of poverty in the community shape the resource base in the school, given that such rural schools relied heavily on parents' support for paying fees for different school projects, and purchase of resources.

From my informal discussion with the head, it emerged that the levels of education in the community were low, albeit most were able to read and write in their mother tongue, they were severely constrained in the command of the official language, English. However, what was encouraging is that this setback did not prevent the support and encouragement of their children's work in school.

Zim School 5 was a rural district council (RDC) owned school constructed after independence. The school was severely under-resourced, given the nature of the community's economic base and the responsible authority. There were shortages of books

and such things as newsprint for charts were not available. There was no telephone service available, thus making communication with the outside world extremely difficult. The teachers only used their cellphones when they went to Masvingo during pay days as explained by Zim Teacher 5: “Cellphone doesn’t work here, you can never get network even if you go to the main road. We tend to forget that we own these things. We just get used to it”. The school was not electrified and there was no piped water. They sourced drinking water from two boreholes within the schoolyard. A river close-by provided water for gardening and other non-drinking purposes. The long walking distance from the main road due to poor access to public transport, absence of other basic facilities such as telephone, electricity, piped water, etc. made this school unattractive for teacher deployment. At the time of my visit, four teachers had left the school, three to take up posts in town and the fourth to look for employment across the border.

This was a fairly small school with an enrolment of about 700 and a staff compliment of 21 including the head and deputy, and class sizes of approximately 45. The school offerings were up to ‘O’ Level and the rate of success in the terminal examinations for 2007 had risen to 69%. The head was happy about this achievement intimating that he had assumed headship of that school two years earlier when the pass rate was as low as 30%. He, however, hastened to express his fears that the pass rate was likely to drop as some of the competent teachers had left the school. Encouragingly, however, two of his teachers were studying for degrees and the third was on the PGDE programme.

The teacher described the level of interaction among teachers as healthy and this was a motivating factor that boosted their morale given the limited environment in which they were operating. The discussion above suggests that the school was operating somewhat effectively given the contextual challenges. A major disabling factor in this school emanated from limited resource provision. While this presented a challenge likely to have impacted negatively on their professional development, the relational interdependency among staff and a supportive parental community were likely to foster effective classroom practice and professional development.

Zim School 6

Zim School 6, like the majority of the schools used in this study, was a progeny of Zimbabwean independence. The school was about 53 kilometres from Masvingo town. The leading road to the school was all gravel and in a seriously deteriorated state. There were very bad patches of sandy soil, which made travelling extremely difficult. The 53 kilometres took me almost two hours to accomplish. No public transport serviced this road and teachers have to walk about six kilometres to the nearest main road to get transport. This lack of transport service makes the school a less attractive location for those seeking employment.

The community is made up of subsistence farmers settled on sandy, unproductive land. This social setting of Zim School 6 is similar to that of Zim School 5 although a distinct feature is that in this vicinity farmers are apparently far more productive in their market gardening than those around School 5. At the time of my visit, there were many different varieties of vegetables and fruit including wild fruit for sale at the entrance to the school and at various points along the main road. Some farmers were ferrying bags of their produce to the main road to transport them to the city for sale. This portrayed an industrious picture of the community around this school and to me it suggested some extent of community capability for school support. Zim School 6 was a rural day secondary school under the RDC. Given the type of responsible authority, on the religious landscape the school bore no distinct affiliations to the conventional traditions implying a mixed bag of religions and traditions. However, given the general attire, long white robes worn by the women traders at the school entrance and along the road, I got the feeling that the majority in the community belonged to the indigenous and fairly new Christian denominations.

Zim School 6 was a fairly small school with a total enrolment of approximately 750 students and a compliment of 20 teachers including head and deputy. The school provided secondary day tuition to students mainly from its feeder primary school a few hundred metres away, but broadly from its catchment area comprising neighbouring primary schools. Class sizes were between 40 and 45 and the school offered up to 'O' Level. Equipped with beautifully constructed physical infrastructure on a plain stretch of sandy

land, there was adequate floor space for students. At the time of my visit, some construction was going on and the Head indicated it was a new ablution block for students. Each classroom had an office and this afforded reasonably spacious shared offices for teachers. In addition, teachers had a spacious staffroom with individual tables where they met at break time and in which they held their meetings.

The school was severely constrained. It was not electrified, and from my interaction with the school Head, there were no indications that electrification would reach the school in the foreseeable future. The Rural Electrification Programme intended by government to benefit schools inter alia, still had a long way before being brought to such schools as Zim School 6. There were no telephone facilities and this made communication with the outside world difficult. The situation was further compounded by the fact that cellophane network did not service this area. The Head, deputy or their appointee had to go to town at least every two weeks to post and fetch mail. Zim School 6 did not have piped water but had an abundant water supply from a perennial stream less than a kilometre away, and two boreholes within its vicinity.

The teaching/learning resources were also in short supply. The school did not have a science laboratory, but had a small library that was virtually empty. The school head intimated that they had been informed of a book donation by a NGO and were awaiting receipt of that consignment. This, she said, would boost texts for the 'O' Level students as the offer letter indicated relevance of the books to senior classes. Zim Teacher 6 underscored the issue of limited resources in his comments:

We are very short of basically all the resources. Pupils share textbooks, about 6 to a book. Other resources are all in short supply, and things like mighty markers, compasses for my area geog are very difficult to get. So it's very difficult at times to operate with the meagre resources. So in most cases we end up having to write notes on the board for students to copy... there are no services here, we have no phone or electricity, but we work together as staff and the community is nice.

The general education levels of the parents around the school were higher than around Zim School 5. Parents were able to read and write in their language and some could understand

the official language, English, although they could not communicate effectively. Notwithstanding this official language limitation, the parents understood the value of education and were supportive of their school as confirmed by Zim Teacher 6:

They are very supportive yes, but at times they do not provide enough resources at home, for example in a geography lesson some pupils have no pencils, books are not covered, no rulers, but the majority of parents provide, but just a few. Ehh, the relationship with parents; I can describe it as okay because I normally meet these parents on consultation days.

Apart from the challenges related to resource limitations, a lively reading culture was also noted in this school, two teachers were pursuing various degree studies and the head was awaiting final results for BEd. This aspect and good relations among staff and between the school and community enriched the school environment and likely fostered professional development.\

Conclusion

The schools discussed in this section reveal both disabling and enabling factors. Enabling factors relate to relational dimensions within the school activity system, the search for knowledge among teachers, literacy levels in the communities and the support by parents. Disabling factors were to do with limited resource provision by the responsible authority, and the social and economic levels of the community. What was evident is that the three schools under the RDCs were severely constrained in terms of basic services and resources. These factors spawn contradictions and consequently impacting on achievement of the object.

While economic levels around these schools may undermine the schools' possibilities for pooling resources together, nevertheless, such limitations may strengthen the spirit of personal and interpersonal agency and interdependency for the benefit of all given that contradiction encourages productions of innovations to overcome them. As poverty can also act as prompt for staff development where one is held accountable (Roth & Tobin, 2004) one is inclined to believe that the reading culture noted in these schools was spawned by resource poverty. The next section discusses the SA school sites.

The SA School Sites

Introduction

The discussion on the research setting is presented in two parts. The first part covers the setting in terms of policy and the second part discusses the schools. The Human Science Research Council SA (2005) captured a learners' definition of SA rural areas:

...Places that are located far outside town, where there are no bridges, where no white people stay, far from tar and gravelled road, where there are no buses to town, no street names, and where police do not follow up on cases. This isolation means vulnerability to diseases, as there are no doctors, clinics are out of reach, where there are no choices except to go to the cities for work (p. 31).

In the context of this study, rurality from the SA context would refer to the former homelands or Bantustans that share some characteristic features like poor topography, limited accessibility of communication, transport, health and life-long learning. Homesteads are either significantly dense, formal and informal houses or village-style settlements. The formal and informal settlements may be sparsely situated, but where they are located the homesteads constitute densely settled populations.

These rural areas fall under the jurisdiction of the traditional authorities and leaders (Nkosi/Ishe). Most of these areas experience the highest levels of poverty and unemployment in the country. There is therefore high dependency on the meagre pensions and social grants. In the absence of some form of income, employment and food security, families rely on their children's labour for survival (Human Science Research Council SA, 2005). The implication is that these rural people do not derive income from farming notwithstanding that land cultivation and livestock remain central to their lives. The communities view livestock as serving a symbolic function, as insurance for denoting a sense of community and neighbourliness and at the same time acts as a basis for marriage and citizenship. Farming is therefore the main form of income for very few households. Land and livestock are only vital for their sense of themselves (Human Science Research Council SA, 2005). Between the traditional homesteads in the formal and informal

settlements, schools are centrally located within short walking distances. In the village-style settlements however, schools are located very far away requiring learners to walk long distances on risky roads to get to school. Poor conditions of roads and bridges deter accessibility to buses and taxis.

Most people in these rural settings on the overall have low levels of education. Most of these rural communities view education as vital for their children: “parents placed great value on the education of their children because without it there were few employment possibilities ...go to school, be educated and prosper and be a person we can be proud of” (Human Science Research Council SA, 2005:33). The general understanding of school support to most of these communities’ is to surrender everything to the schools without any form of parental involvement in school life. Consequently, in most rural settings communities do not fully support their children’s education. The support for the education of their children is often undermined by ignorance due to the absence of education about and integration into the daily lives and activities of the schools.

The schools are often under-resourced and poorly staffed. Basic services such as electricity and piped water are often lacking and learners often do their homework using candlelight. These schools do not provide accommodation for teachers on campus, hence teachers commute to schools on a daily basis, which may create challenges as these teachers may leave school earlier and/or arrive later than the stipulated time. The SA school sites used in this study were located in the areas as described above.

The Policy Context

South African schools are broadly classified into two categories: private and public schools. Wedekind (2005) distinguishes between these broad categories and comes up with five types of rural public schools and three of rural private. The public schools may fall into any of the following: historically disadvantaged, rural formal schools, farm schools, rural tribal schools and former mission schools. These schools are state-owned and run and make up the largest number of schools nationally. The private schools may be any of: elite private, farm and community, and mission and church schools. Of this group, only the elite

private are fully privately owned and run, the other two types have partial state ownership and funding.

The Schools

There were six research sites used on the SA side. As in the Zimbabwean context, the schools have been labelled SA 1 to 6 not for any ranking but for purposes of identification and confidentiality. The labels SA 1 to 6 also correspond with the labels used to identify participants as SA Teacher 1 to 6. The research used five public and one non-public school: a mission school. Detailed descriptions of each school are provided below. Part of the information, which builds up this account, was gathered through informal discussions with the principal/deputy principal during the interim visits to the schools. The bulk of the data was generated from the research participants during interviews. The findings from these discussions are detailed below, for tabulated information, refer to Appendix 9.

SA School 1

SA School 1 is a Catholic Mission School, which was put up to service the black community in the surrounding village settlements in the area. The mission school represented a distinct but small category of schools founded by missionaries. As one of the most recent, major projects by Catholic missionaries, this school opened doors to learners in 2004. It still enjoyed a lot of support and good relations with the church. SA School 1 maintained a particular Catholic character, ethos and culture from where it takes its distinct character; good discipline and orderliness, businesslike approach to work, a clean environment, autocratic leadership, etc. The atmosphere at the school on the two visits was calm and businesslike. There were no learners roaming around out of class and teachers who were on free periods were busy in the staffroom. The entrance to the school was under lock and key. The deputy principal explained that this was necessary to ensure that learners do not run away before the end of session. He hastened to admit that the gate was often left open, but learners never went out without permission. The school was 135 kilometres from Pietermaritzburg and about half that distance was on good and well-maintained gravel surface.

Despite being in a deep rural area, SA School 1 had a very good infrastructure: spaciouly constructed on a low-lying stretch of land at the foot of a small hill. On top of the hill about 3 kilometres away, was the mission station and a further 4 kilometres away from the mission station were a stretch of villages with scattered homesteads, very distinct due to their smallness and thatched roofs. Some big round brick-under-zinc houses were also sparsely dotted amongst the small pole and mud houses. The type and size of the houses (small, built of mud and pole) were suggestive of a low economic base to the community. The school community was poor and families relied on social grants and pensions for survival. While the majority in the village settlements had small pieces of land, the majority did not yield enough even to feed their families. The deputy principal explained that these people were not keen to work on the land but to receive government grants. Due to the levels of poverty in this community, the learners were not required to pay fees as the school had been designated to the non-fee paying category.

The levels of education of parents were low, albeit some could read and write in IsiZulu, very few could understand English words. Nevertheless, the community understood the value of education for their children and supported school as indicated by SA Teacher 1 in his comments:

Because when I call the parents they will come and we will discuss about the learner and have agreements I will then see whether those agreements work because you find that there is a change in the performance of that learner after I have called parents. The issues of absenteeism – learners were always absent because parents would have sent them somewhere, that one parents are now trying by all means to minimize.

The limitations in terms of material support for the education of their children were undermined by their harsh survival conditions due to extreme poverty and unemployment.

The school catered for a very big catchment area and their neighbouring school was almost 50 kilometres away, consequently some learners walked very long distances to get to the school. On the day of the visit, the one learner whom we gave a lift from the school was dropped off 15 kilometres away and still had another 6 kilometres to walk before getting to

his home. The learner explained that he needed to wake up around 04h00 to be in time for the start of classes and needed at least three pairs of shoes a year. The boy indicated that walking was risky but he had no choice because he loved school and that in winter he looked for a place to lodge near the school because it got dark too early for him to get to his home. The location of the school was not serviced by public transport, notwithstanding the well-maintained gravel road. Learners from far-away places relied on lifts, but compounding this distance was the cost of transport. With the result that if left learners having to rely on foot access. Long walks to school also presented other problems: across hills, through valleys, fields, and dongas, rivers and streams, over muddy roads, past bushes and forests (Human Science Research Council SA, 2005).

SA School 1 offered Grade 10 – 12 classes and had a total enrolment of about 600 learners and a staff compliment of 17 teachers. Class sizes were between 50 and 60 learners and classroom space for learners was adequate. The deputy principal intimated that in terms of class management the teachers were coping with the large classes but hastened to point out that the large classes had consequences for the quality of teaching, teacher-learner interaction and resource provision as well as their staff development. No office space was available for teachers, leaving the staffroom as the only space for both relaxation and business.

SA School 1 boasted of good Matric results for two years in succession (2007 and 2008) after experiencing poor results with their first matriculants. SA Teacher 1 elaborated:

The big classes, Ja! They have confidence that they are in a school that produces good results you see and they also want to have those good results that can also be motivating. Some years ago they were not motivated, but these 2 years especially, it's not hard to teach them because of the good results that we got these past 2 years.

The infrastructure comprised nine spacious classrooms, a big library, big computer room, a home economics classroom and a science laboratory, but the school was severely constrained by limited material resource provision. The library and computer rooms were virtually empty, the laboratory had very little equipment and the home economics

classroom was unfurnished. In terms of reading materials, the school was further severely constrained. Explaining this shortage SA Teacher 1 pointed out:

As far as the desks are concerned, we have enough, but when it comes to books and other materials you saw it, we don't have. For my Grade 11 there are no books for physical science, we ordered them last year but we did not get them. So what I normally do is I use different personal books that I have, because we have a photocopying machine, I will photocopy something that I want to give or I will photocopy using the chalkboard situation (laughs) Ja!

SA Teacher 1 further reported gross inadequacy of science equipment and tools in particular for Grades:10 and 11 with large enrolments. Through personal agency, teachers had resorted to improvisation and employing group strategies to minimize the impact of these shortages. SA Teacher 1 explains:

Y-a-a-h equipment is not enough for grades 10 and 11 because they are in big numbers. Each group has members that are up to 6 and what I normally do is I allocate duties to each group member.

The school has piped water and telephone facilities, but is severely constrained by an absence of electricity, hence no access to Information Communication Technologies rendering the computer lab a white elephant. The four available computers were locked away and a small generator operated the photocopier and one computer as and when necessary.

The deputy principal explained that it was difficult to get electricity into the school because the DoE pursued their own schedule for school electrification. At the time of data generation, the electrification company was in another very distant district, and it would take more than 2 years before electricity got to this school. The deputy further intimated that follow-ups did not yield encouraging results as they were being advised to wait patiently. The Municipality, which had also promised to electrify this school by early 2008, had also failed to do so. Thus the fruitless efforts had frustrated and pushed the school into adopting a wait and see attitude. Concomitant to this the Human Science Research Council SA (2005) noted that absence of basic infrastructures (water, electricity, etc), which comprise the practical social community needs, impacts on access to schooling and quality of education.

SA School 2

SA School 2 was a fairly big public school located just outside a big informal settlement and constructed before the liberation. Due to this location many learners did not travel long distances to get to school. Mostly up to about 2 kilometres to the turn-off into the school was a main road serviced by public transport from Durban and Pietermaritzburg. This school could be likened to the township schools in terms of location and provision of basic services and facilities. Though rural, the school formed part of the Durban Metropolitan area as explained by SA Teacher 2 below:

It's part of Durban metro so they get most of the services that you get in a metro municipality and but still it's a rural school anywhere, it's quite far away from both Durban and Pmb so Ja I am not sure how far from Durban but about 51 kilometres from Pmb, it should be slightly more from Durban.

The road to the school was tarred all through up to 1 kilometre from the school. Albeit small in terms of number and size of buildings, the school was constructed on some high ground leaving lots of open space. Next to the school was a feeder primary school from where SA School 2 drew the majority of the learners. The gate into the school was kept locked and only opened to let in visitors. As explained by the principal the gate was kept locked as deterrent for learners who often left school for the rest of the day at break time. The major challenges the school face according to the principal were to do with discipline, inadequate resources and large classes in small classrooms. The school generally displayed some signs of neglect, the grounds lacked maintenance with grass and shrubs growing untended, paper litter all over, and broken windowpanes and floors.

On each of my three visits to SA School 2, lots of learners were roaming about outside notwithstanding that classes were in progress and the noise coming out of some of the classrooms insinuated that there were no teachers tending these classes. On the other hand several teachers were also making noise in the small staffroom while two of them were reading/marking in their cars. Glancing into the staffroom as I walked through to the

principal's office, overcrowding and disorder were evident. Dusty and broken floors were evident in the staffroom and the passage leading to the principal's office.

The school day started at 08h00 and ended at 14h45. The school offerings were from Grade 8 to 12. Enrolment was close to 1600 learners and it had a staff compliment of 28 teachers. Classes at this school were very big - between 60 and 70 learners. Classrooms were so crowded that teacher movement within the lesson was limited and no space was allowed for the teacher's chair. The principal explained as another serious challenge the school had given the large numbers against limited accommodation. He further explained that plans were underway to put up another block of classrooms, but those plans needed concretisation. SA Teacher 2 explained that if he wanted to sit, he would sit right at the door or on a learner's desk. He added:

...So what you find is that with floor space limitations, you find that we have upwards of 70 - 80 learners in class which means teachers have too many free periods and, yeah, but then when it comes to marking it is a headache and even teaching itself. I mean it's so well and good when you have many free periods as a teacher but once you get into a class and have to teach 50, 60 even 70 learners then it becomes a problem.

While the explanation given by SA Teacher 2 above could shed some light on why many teachers were in the staffroom, his response to a related question suggests that these teachers may not have been on a free period.

...teaching in a black school, Ja!, can be draining sometimes because you find very few people are prepared to actually do their work. Mostly teachers just loaf around in the staffroom never attend a class. It's the main weakness of the whole system. Apart from what everyone else can tell you, but I can tell you that teachers just don't teach. Ja! That's the main worry I have about education system in this country in general. Obviously I think they are just lazy, they just are not being ethical and there is no supervision.

There was no office space for teachers hence the only available space for them was the small staffroom which was a venue for both business and relaxation as explained by SA Teacher 2:

The staffroom is where teachers are based as we do not have any other place to sit and do our work. So if you are not doing classes, then you are in the staffroom. It also becomes our kitchen when we have our lunch. My desk in the staffroom, this is where all my work is based, my work at school, my prep, my file, my everything because we do not have desks or cupboards in the classroom they are too packed, the space is taken up by desks for learners. So we end up just using the staffroom for everything.

In terms of resources and services, the school was better resourced than SA School 1. This school had basic facilities: piped water, electricity and telephone. While the school was electrified, there was apparently a recurring electrical problem. The basic ICT facilities were also accessible, only to teachers. SA Teacher 2 explains the state of resources:

... The school itself is not very well resourced but I think it's the legacy of this country more schools not well resourced, so Ja. We have the basics, we have the basic stationery, some computers, printers, faxes and what have you, but it's not as well resourced as one would want for instance we do not have a science lab or a library, ja things like that.

Due to limited floor space, the computer facilities were located in a passage next to the principal's office. Structures like the library and science laboratories were also not available and due to large numbers, reading materials could not go round all learners in some grades hence books had to be shared as explained by SA Teacher 2 below:

In other grades pupils share up to 6 or 7 learners to one book and staff like that. I don't use teaching aids, not necessarily because I teach maths but because they are not available and in most cases it's because of the electricity problem. And also because it's just too many learners ...

The community placed value in the education of their children as a way to get them out of poverty. However, levels of education were described as low. Many parents could read and write in their mother tongue, but they could not understand some basic English words. The principal expressed doubts whether the community had a deep understanding of the value of education and their role in the learning of their children because they left everything to the school without offering any form of support. He further explained that when invited for meetings only two or three would turn up. He cited an incident where he had to send back all the learners to bring their parents for a meeting as the only time he managed to get them in to the school. The next time around the trick did not work. Thus despite community vision of what education could do to uplift their families from poverty, this was neither reflected in their actions nor their relationship with the school. The economic base in this

community was weak and most people relied on social grants and pensions. Although the school was in the fee-paying category, many parents and caregivers were unable to pay fees.

Relations were apparently cordial among teachers in the school and SA Teacher 2 explained that he benefited from the non-formal collegial interaction on the general education issues. The teacher explained that in terms of actual content and pedagogy, he did not get any help from within the school, as he was the most senior mathematics teacher. SA Teacher 2 explained:

I am free with all of them. I believe that our informal discussions are quite constructive although sometimes we take no notice, informal professional development yes, takes place because ... waiting for a taxi sometimes we get to talk about things or ways to make our schools better, not just our school but all schools and black schools in particular...

There is confirmation of incidental/informal professional development. That, it is sometimes spontaneous and goes unnoticed is in tandem with observations by Fraser, Kennedy et al. (2007).

SA School 3

SA School 3 was located in the former homelands and servicing the village communities. Due to the nature of the village set-up several learners walked long distances to get to school. Transport service along this road was limited to given times and due to financial resource limitations most of the children could not afford full transport costs. The school was about 100 kilometres from Pietermaritzburg and approximately half the distance was on gravel. The gravel road, though narrowly constructed, was well maintained. Like SA School 2, there were some signs of lack of maintenance with visible broken windowpanes and an over-crowded and disorderly staffroom. My discussion with the principal was limited to introducing myself and my research, inclusive of signing the consent form after which the principal wanted to be excused purportedly being busy.

This was a big government school constructed before liberation. The school had a beautiful elevated structure that could be seen from some distance. School enrolment was about 1500 and had a staff compliment of 23 teachers. The school offered Grade 8 – 12 classes and class sizes were between 50 and 75 and as with SA School 2 classes were reportedly crowded. Structurally, the school did not have a science laboratory and a library and teachers had no office space, thus, the small staffroom served a dual purpose: as staffroom and shared office. This is explained by SA Teacher 3:

This is my own seat, this my desk with books and everything, you see the ex books for marking... we use the staffroom for many things, marking, chatting Ja! for any other things. It's crowded because that's where we keep all our teaching stuff, but as long as you know where to find what, that's fine.

Their working day was fairly short, from 07h45 to 14h30 inclusive of one-hour lunch break between 11h00 and 12h00. The teacher explained that teachers often milled around for only about 15 minutes otherwise they would be rushing to get transport back home. The school was satisfactorily resourced with the basic equipment; computers and printers for staff, telephone, piped water and electricity. In terms of books and other reading materials, learners had to share about 1:8 in the junior classes and 1:5 or 1:6 in senior classes. SA Teacher 3 explained: "This time, I cannot not complain about resources because we do have basic resources but the books are a problem, they are few for the many learners we have". SA Teacher 3 complained that limited textbooks were problematic given the class sizes and the learner indiscipline in the school. Teacher 3 confided that there had been no debate regarding these resources as they never gathered formally to talk about anything as staff. Discipline in the school was a problem and coupled with a poor reading and learning culture, learner achievement in external results was always low. She hastened to point out that the low pass rate was due to learner indiscipline as it was sometimes difficult to teach them. She asserted: "In these large classes there is no discipline like I have been saying you cannot control those learners when they are 75 because it's like you can't see everybody."

Education levels in the community were generally low though some could read and write in their mother tongue. Not many parents understood any English and so reports had to be written in the mother tongue. Generally parents were not supportive of the school. Their

support was only confined to uniforms and fees. SA Teacher 3 attributed the lack of interest in school by both parents and learners to the poor results the school was producing. Parental relationship with schools can be determined by the amount of contact they maintain with teachers to discuss indiscipline, school attendance, and learner performance and achievement (Friedman & Krongold, 1993) . Contrary to this view, parents in this community did not turn up when the school invited them to discuss important issues regarding the learning of their children. SA Teacher 3 explained:

When we call parents, maybe 2 parents come so we do not really meet them ja!
From parents there is nothing that we get. Even if we ask, they don't give. I
have asked children to bring calculators but you find only 4 or 5 have them but
they have expensive cellphones, much more expensive than calculators. We
inform parents about that but they do not work with us.

SA Teacher 3 further explained that the school as a whole did not understand whether it was because they did not comprehend either the value of their children's education or that of their participation in school life. Possession of expensive cell phones where parents have a weak economic base may imply crime or even lack of interest in education. Economically this community comprised people living on a very weak economic base. The majority lived on government grants and support of their children who worked on the nearby cane farms. The teacher explained that the school deserved to be in non-fee paying category as parents struggled to raise school fees. The community did not practice any substantial farming for subsistence although they had small pieces of land around their homes. They preferred to buy food from the meagre grants. Staff relations within the school were good, with collegial interdependence within and outside specialization areas on both professional and social matters. The collegial interdependence enhanced the professional learning atmosphere. Worth noting was the fact that SA Teacher 3 enjoyed staff interdependence and this provided some scaffolding for professional development. While learner indiscipline, resource shortages and absence of parents' involvement were major challenges, encouragingly, the healthy collegial relations and support were a critical enabling factor for professional development.

SA School 4

SA School 4 was a fairly big government school, about 85 kilometres from Pietermaritzburg. The school was located just outside a sugarcane farming area servicing the village settlements adjacent to the sugarcane farms. Most of the road to the school was tarred except for the remaining 15-20 kilometres off the highway. The gravel section of the road showed signs of neglect. The area was, however, well serviced with public transport. The school grounds were generally clean but due to the location of the school on a hill, strong winds lifted a lot of dust making the interview venue very dusty.

On the two days of my visit, many learners in the adjacent area just behind a block of classes next to the car park, were shouting and playing ball. On two occasions the principal used a stick to silence them, but each time he turned his back they resumed. The principal explained that indiscipline was a major problem in the school. He admitted that apart from corporal punishment there was no other way they could discipline some of the learners. He pointed out that most of the learners were older than the expected school-going age but they could not chase them away. However, contrary to these comments by the principal, SA Teacher 4 indicated that there were no discipline problems as follows:

No, no, no, I don't have any discipline problems. I don't really. Sometimes I even get shocked because it looks like we are on the same level because of age but they do respect me. They always say I am their role model, the way I deliver, the way I handle myself and my things they really want to be like me one day.

While the teacher's comments contradict the principal, the principal further alluded to a situation where the problem of learner indiscipline could be addressed if parents were assisting the schools. From his comments, the relationship between the school and parents and between teachers and learners appeared strained. Parents in this community were reported as not supportive of their children's education. They left everything to the school without showing any interest in what or how their children fare in the school and limited their support to the purchase of uniforms and paying fees. Again contrary to the principal's comments, SA Teacher 4 explained:

Parents are very supportive, yes they are. Yes, we do conference every time even if with one parent when we experience a learner having lower marks we invite the parent. But each and every term we invite parents for all learners and discuss things with each and every parent as me Ms ... I sit down with the parent of the child maybe whose behaviour I find difficult, so I discuss that thing with a parent. And the other teachers will get a chance to discuss anything with the same parent if they feel like.

These comments again contradict those made by the principal and, given that I had witnessed the principal applying corporal punishment to some big boys, I tended to believe that the principal's story was more accurate. How involved parents may feel about the teaching and learning of their children may be partly reflected in their relationship with the school (Human Science Research Council SA, 2005). The level of education in the community was low and their economic base was generally low given the general salary/wage scales in the sugarcane farming.

Enrolment at the time of data generation stood at about 1300 with a staff compliment of 27 teachers. The offerings were from Grades 8 to 12 and class sizes were between 55 and 70. The junior Grades had up to 80 learners. SA Teacher 4 pointed out that the school had more learners than other neighbouring secondary schools and she attributed this to the quality of education that SA School 4 provided and this attraction contributed to overcrowding in the classrooms. SA Teacher 4 asserted: "Because of the education that we have here in the school, they have the nearest high schools but most learners prefer this school and as a result our classrooms are overcrowded because of that."

The school was electrified, had a telephone line and piped water. There was a small library with very few texts and there was no science laboratory. SA Teacher 4 explained that only the theory of science was being taught due to the absence of relevant infrastructure, books and other resources.

It's difficult to get other resources; really we depend mainly on textbooks. We have science classes here but nothing specifically for sciences. So it's still in theory and no practicals for now, maybe in future but now we still have to rely on textbooks to teach theory.

There was a computer room but the computers were locked away for security as an earlier consignment had been vandalized, consequently, this resource was not readily accessible to

teachers and students as SA Teacher 4 explained: "... ja, we have computers but they are locked away in the strong room because some were stolen before they were even opened". This confirms observations by Human Science Research Council SA (2005) that some resources like telephones, computers, and photocopiers were often stored away for safety reasons in inaccessible places and rarely used. With regard to textbooks, SA Teacher 4 made the following comments; "Ja, we have books, we have books for learners plenty of them. They are there packed in the computer centre. Principal makes sure that he buys them yearly and we have a right to order any book that we like."

However, SA Teacher 4 seemingly was an unreliable participant. Having indicated that there were plenty of books in the comment above, she later mentioned sharing of textbooks, "... yes they share 5 or 6 learners to a book". In most cases the teachers had to photocopy sections for learners. The teacher explained that the shortage was more experienced in the languages and this was presenting challenges and therefore limiting professional development. Textbooks are a central teaching aid and an extremely important source of learning that has to be readily accessible to learners and teachers (Human Science Research Council SA, 2005). The teacher further explained that quality and effectiveness in education were difficult to achieve in these rural schools due to lack of resources. Given these shortages, SA Teacher 4 explained that school policy did not to allow learners to take textbooks away, but she often flouted that policy.

Interpersonal interdependence and cordial relations were rife within and outside specialization areas in the school and teachers offered support to each other both academically and professionally. Explaining teacher interdependence, SA Teacher 4 said:

My HoD, and the deputy, whenever I have a problem, I simply go to them. They are always willing to help, for example if a learner is difficult, I call the deputy because I am not allowed to use corporal punishment. It's great academically and non-academically. We get along with everyone. There are no groups here. We just get along all of us. We are one happy family.

School started at 08h00 and ended at 14h30 on Monday to Thursday and at 14h00 on Friday. At the time of the study SA Teacher 4 was the only one in this school community engaged in some study. Given the inconsistencies in her responses and contradictions

between her remarks, those of the principal and my observations, it is not easy to determine whether the school context indeed encouraged professional development.

SA School 5

SA School 5 was approximately 65 kilometres from Pietermaritzburg located in a deep rural area. Only about half the distance is tarred, the rest was gravel. The offerings at the school were from Grades 8 to 12. This was a very big government school with an approximate enrolment of 1600 learners and 29 teachers. Class sizes were big, between 60 and 70. The school was surrounded by village settlements and was constructed before liberation. On the day of my visit, many learners were outside classrooms and the principal was chasing them back into the class with a stick. As I walked past, many teachers were in the staff room albeit it was well after break time.

During the informal discussion, the principal lamented the problem of indiscipline pointing out that the stick was the only language learners understood otherwise after break they did not want to go back into class. He however hastened to point out that this was against the SA policies but learners left the school management team without any choice. He also highlighted that the use of the ‘stick’ was with tacit approval of parents who saw it as the only way of disciplining children when all others failed. SA Teacher 5 confirmed the issue of learners not wanting to go back into class:

...We go back to the 4th period after break, everybody is tired, learners don't want to go back into class. Our principal has to make them to go inside and in the class they say ooh we are tired we will not listen to you. Those kids, it's not easy to work here. Like first time when I came I was eager to teach and now everybody, all teachers sitting there in the staffroom and if you go to class you are teaching, other learners are roaming around outside and they go on screaming through your window eeh! Eeh! and it's bad so that's what happens mostly.

Given, a situation where learners do not go back to class without force and teachers remain in the staffroom when they know they must not, as described by SA Teacher 5 above, teacher professional learning and development is not likely to occur. The teacher practice points to an absence of the basic elements of professionalism. SA Teacher 5 further

explained that there were classes that were known for indiscipline and thus influenced the whole school, particularly where there were more boys than girls and such classes were full of learners who were pushed forward and they were difficult to teach. Further elaborating on the issue of indiscipline SA Teacher 5 added:

...The learners ja it's difficult to teach them, the learners are wild, they are slow learners, they are old, they smoke dagga. If a learner fails a class 2 times he cannot be allowed to repeat the 3rd time so they are just pushed to the next level. Others are older than me and some learners cannot write their names, it's a challenge to teach them.

The above contextual challenges are seemingly more to do with the system than the school and would probably need efforts that transcend the school to address. Albeit the school appeared structurally beautiful, there were signs of neglect, some broken windowpanes and door handles and, broken and dusty floors. Apart from the administration block, generally the school was not tidy, grass and paper litter were all over and a big pothole at the gate which made driving in and out of the school difficult. What was interesting is that many students came from Pietermaritzburg and were ferried by two buses every day. The principal explained that the school was popular previously due to good results that were produced, but the standard had since gone down due to the calibre of the learners among other contributing factors. He confessed he had always wondered why, and felt that was basically the reason why parents continued to send their children out of town to SA School 5. Regarding this issue however, SA Teacher 5 had different views. She felt that parents were unable to discipline their children and thought that rural schools would place them back on course. She had this theory because most of the learners from town were the most undisciplined.

The school was in an economically disadvantaged community. There was a lot of unemployment and the rural folk lived on grants. Parents of children who commuted from town would be economically better placed. Presumably these were working people who could bear the daily transport costs for their children. Education levels around the school were low. Not many could read and write even in the mother tongue and school reports were completed in IsiZulu.

The school was severely under resourced, albeit electrified, with piped water and telephone. Structurally, the school was well provided for with consumer studies kitchen, library, science laboratory and computer laboratory. However, these were not stocked. SA Teacher 5 explains:

We do have a library without books and proper resources. We have a physical science lab but we don't have any resources, a computer lab, but we do have computers, but the problem is that computers get stolen all the time so they are locked away.

Reading resources were also in short supply as many as 8 learners shared one textbook and the situation was more evident in the junior classes. Teaching aids were not made available to teachers. In her specialization: Consumers, no raw materials were provided, the teacher provided from personal resources. Other teaching aids like posters, the teacher had to provide as computers were locked away for security. This practice of locking computers away for safety seemed common in these rural schools. The teacher also lamented the issue of the Consumer Science kitchen that she was desperately in need of. SA Teacher 5 pointed out;

... it's a deep rural area but we do have electricity but we lack resources ... I am teaching consumer studies but we don't have resources. I don't have a kitchen, consumer studies requires a kitchen for practicals so I am just teaching theory.

The school had adequate classrooms for learners, but lacked office space, the staffroom served as the multi-purpose room. SA Teacher 5 however commented that for any serious work, the staffroom was not ideal because of the noise made by colleagues. SA Teacher 5 made the following comment:

I come and sit with others. But sometimes it's bad because if you come in and the teachers are sitting there without going to the class, so using the staffroom sometimes it's bad because they always sit there without going to class, talking, talking, talking - you don't know why they even come to school.

The level of interaction among staff was good and this helped to boost the teacher's morale given the challenging environment fraught of learner indiscipline, under-resourcing and lack of basic levels of professionalism in staff. SA Teacher 5 indicated that they supported each other generally socially at departmental and interdepartmental levels. Their

professional discussions centred mainly on learner discipline during lunch break when they assembled over lunch. A disturbing feature was the lack of school support by parents. Parents were not co-operating adequately with the school. When invited for meetings, one or two pitched up, the reality was that they did not set foot in the school premises. They were compelled to pitch up to collect December reports as it was school policy not to give these documents to learners. SA Teacher 5 explained:

They only come to get reports, when there is a meeting they don't come because our principal does not give the reports to learners at the end of the year. ...and when they come they shout at you, 'why you failed my kid, she told me you are not responsible, you don't come to school' etc... even if you write a letter saying you want to see them after a learner told you a sad story about home and you want to help, they don't pitch up.

While parents in most school communities would generally believe in the good of education and the need for their active involvement in school life, (Mulkeen, 2006) contrarily parents around SA School 5 failed to act on such understanding. Worth noting was the fact some of the parents in this community had very low levels of education and were likely to be undermined by this illiteracy and unfamiliarity with school systems. SA Teacher 5 explained:

... Sometimes even if you give a child something to work with the parent and say go home do this, the child will come back and say ja my parents cannot read English, not even IsiZulu, so I can't ask them to help me with the homework.

The above description seems to confirm observations by Taylor and Mulhall (2001) that parents may lack the ability to help their children in learning as they are likely to be less educated themselves regardless of the great value they may attach to education. Given this, one may also view the parents' lack of school support not as cynical, but probably a result of lack of knowledge. Notwithstanding the diverse challenges highlighted in this school context, SA Teacher 5 got encouragement from collegial support and her HoD who was reading for MED with UKZN and this was likely to enhance her professional development experiences.

SA School 6

SA School 6 was the closest of the South African school sites located 39 kilometres from Pietermaritzburg. SA School 6 was one of the big public schools with an enrolment of about 1750 learners and 31 teachers. Class sizes were between 50 and 60 learners each and offerings were from Grades 8 to 12. The road to the school was all tarred. On the day of my visit, many learners were outside the locked gate because they were late and had to wait there until someone came to record their names. SA Teacher 6 explained that those whose names were recorded would be punished for late coming. The teacher explained that gates had to be kept locked, because learners would run away after break time. Within the school many more learners were roaming around outside classes although it was not break time. She explained that many learners at this school for some reason were not motivated to learn.

The school had a beautiful infrastructure located just outside an informal settlement. The main classroom block was a double storey building. It was not possible to establish when the school was built, but from the appearance of the buildings, it could have been constructed either just before or just after the liberation. The main schoolyard and the car park generally lacked maintenance, shrubs were growing wild, but within the courtyard the few flowerbeds were well maintained. The school had adequate learning space but there were no offices for staff, hence their staffroom served a dual purpose. SA Teacher 6 however indicated that the office was crowded given the staff compliment.

The school had the basic resources: electricity, piped water and telephone, but in terms of other resources the school was severely constrained. Structurally, there was neither a library nor a science laboratory but a photocopying machine was available. Small things like stationery were said to be available in the school but accessing them was always a problem. Books were also in short supply. SA Teacher 6 explained:

For resources in the classroom, they share books, for Grade 8 maths we have 50 textbooks for about 360 learners. We got 50/60 textbooks, I have 2 classes for a grade out of 6 classes and we are sharing. Right now I jot down the exercise and they take notes or I photocopy for them...

The school day commenced at 08h00 and ended at 14h30. What was a bit perturbing was that SA Teacher 6 in her description of the working day indicated that upon arrival at school with colleagues, they would remain in the staffroom even after notification of commencement of classes until the principal called to them to go to class "... We get there about 07h30 till 08h00, drink tea or we sit in the staffroom and ... 08hr00 you are called to go to class ...". The community around the school had a very weak economic base and lived mainly on grants although some were working in town. Education levels were not very low, many could read and write in the mother tongue and a few could communicate in English as indicated by SA Teacher 6: "It's a rural school in a rural area, it is a poor community. Ja! They can read many of them and some in English". Given their literacy levels, the community understood the value of education and consequently to some extent supported the school life of their children. They attended meetings as scheduled by the school albeit some failed to implement resolutions. SA Teacher 6 explained:

...For grade 9 we held one meeting with parents, they came around, we sat down and we talked about their kids but even if we tell them what their kids are doing in class, they did not go back to discipline them. So parents are not supportive enough.

Discipline was also a major challenge for this school. Zehava and Salman (2008) noted that in the absence of parental support, classroom discipline suffers. SA Teacher 6 however explained that the majority of the problem learners were repeaters from other schools who were too old to be in Grade 9. She made the following comment:

...For my Grade 9 they are very old, 19 years, and they are talking all the time and doing their own thing. There are repeaters who came from other schools and they think they know everything and there is nothing for them here and it is very difficult to teach.

Given this scenario classroom practice becomes a challenge. These comments resonate with findings by Mulkeen (2006) who noted that rural learners in some school contexts are the most difficult to engage in education. The use of corporal punishment was rife in this school but apparently was not helpful as alluded to by SA Teacher 6: "...we give them corporal punishment and we punish them but it does not work". Such a scenario limited professional development. At the time of the study, SA Teacher 6 was the only one reading for a qualification among the staff at this school. However, staff relations within and

outside the specializations were reportedly good and sharing revolved around professional and social issues as highlighted below.

The relationship with colleagues is fine. Most of us are very young and new in the teaching field so I think we do relate because of that and we have similar professional experience. So we interact with each other academically and socially.

My meeting with the principal did not yield much data as he was apparently busy and not very friendly. Interaction was therefore limited to introductions and discussion on study and, then signing of the consent the form without even reading it.

Conclusion

The schools discussed in this section presented both challenges and enablers. The challenges were related to under-resourcing, learner indiscipline, limited staff commitment and absence of parents' support. While these challenges may present contradictions and affect professional development, what was encouraging is that these teachers were able to 'make-do' within the limitations and challenges and this created space for professional development. Associated to this view Roth and Tobin (2004) posit that identifying contradictions gives rise to effective ways to mediate their effects through creative and innovative approaches to overcome them, and the process brings about change and development.

The enhancing factors were to do with relational dimensions, interpersonal, and personal agency among staff. Having colleagues show support and, interacting with them on professional and social issues enhances confidence and certainty about what they are trying to achieve and how well they may achieve it. This collaborative aspect is essential for personal learning and professional development. In the absence of collaborative skills and relationships in a community, it is not possible to learn. This aspect of collective learning is central to CHAT. Having discussed the school settings, the next section presents participants' biographical data.

Participants' Biographical Data

The PUPTs comprising this group of participants were African men and women, fluent in both English and their mother tongue isiZulu/Shona. The teachers were all university graduates holding an assorted range of degrees relevant to the secondary school curriculum. The teachers were all enrolled on initial teacher education programmes: a PGCE at UKZN in South Africa and a PGDE at ZOU in Zimbabwe and studying through the part-time mixed/distance education mode of delivery. Participants were all in the final year of their teacher education programmes. The South African teachers at this point had just started their second final semester on the programme and the Zimbabwean teachers had finished examinations of their third and final semester. The teachers on the South African side had teaching experiences ranging from one month to ten years before enrolling on the PGCE programme and the Zimbabwean participants had been in classroom practice for between six and nine years before enrolling on the programme.

All Zimbabwean teachers were in the content subject specializations: two were teaching geography, another two were in language and history respectively, and the sixth was in commerce and accounting. Of the six South African teachers, four were in the mathematics and sciences and the remaining two taught language and consumer studies respectively. The next section attempts to uncover what led the teachers into the teaching field.

Participants' Education History Leading Into Teaching

People get into teaching for diverse reasons. Everyone who goes into teaching even temporarily has reasons for choosing to spend a whole day with young people. The pull factors are often unarticulated and complex, yet they have a significant bearing on everyday classroom practice and professional development and job satisfaction and retention. It therefore becomes critical for those choosing to become teachers to interrogate themselves and understand what they expect from teaching as well as what they are willing to give to the profession.

Data provided by teachers in this study indicated diverse intrinsic and extrinsic causal factors that lead them into teaching. The extrinsic factors were to do with financial

pressures, role models and availability of opportunities. Intrinsic reasons were related to personal motivation and curiosity. The following section discusses these extrinsic and intrinsic reasons for getting into the teaching profession. There follows a section that covers where the teachers envision themselves in five years.

Financial Pressures

Participants highlighted the financial aspect as a major contributor in the decisions to get into teaching. The financial needs were not only related to personal needs but also family needs as reflected in the comments below:

After 'A' level, because of my family background I had to go into the teaching because it was much faster to get employed to cater for my siblings who were in school. That was an important factor. I then went to university and did a BA... (Zim Teacher 1).

The teachers succumbed to family financial pressures to assist in the education of siblings. Teaching thus provided an easy and speedy access to employment and earning a salary. Noteworthy is the fact that the teacher was concerned about immediate gains and immediate benefits and not necessarily longer-term career objectives and work/life balance. The teacher apparently looked forward to professional fulfilment to remain in teaching with financial gains as one of the pinch points. Another financial dimension that drew individuals into the teaching field was the attractive remuneration package and the benefits inclusive of social status and dignity as well as job security. Zim Teacher 1 further elaborates:

Also during the time, teaching was a noble profession where you could yearn to be a teacher because remuneration as well as status of a teacher was good. The salary was good you could cater for yourself and also for your family (Zim Teacher 1).

Teaching was regarded as a noble profession. Noble because teachers mould and educate future generations, shaping the young minds and lives and being responsible for children who walk into their classrooms every day (M. Fullan, 1999). Also, of importance is the fact that salary was good enough to sustain individuals and their families, hence the yearning to join the profession. Further, given that university education was through grants that could

be repaid through salary deductions upon commencement of employment, individuals coming from financially restrained families found this a welcome opportunity. However, of concern is the language used in the comments, which implies a currently different picture altogether. Zim Teacher 1 suggests that the situation was no longer the same. Given the socio-economic situation prevailing at the time of the study, one could understand why the teacher raised such sentiments.

Role Models

While financial gains pushed some PUPTs into the teaching profession, for others role models provided a pull factor. In this study, some of these teachers went into the profession because they had experienced good role models within their families or their school years. The following comments show the influence of role models:

It's a long story, my family background, my father was a teacher and did very well in life generally and two of my brothers are also teachers. So, I was brought up in an environment mainly dominated by teachers, being prominent business people, respected in the community and all that had a lot of inspiration on my part though I did not necessarily want to be a teacher but because of my family background I was made to be teacher (Zim Teacher 5).

Teaching in this case was a family tradition, some craft that was naturally mastered and, the surrounding world in childhood. Vicarious learning, is likely to have occurred. It is usually positive behaviour and, the result of that behaviour that may bring about emulation or imitation by others. The childhood experiences, with many prosperous, prominent and well-respected teachers within the family, lead him to conclude that teaching was 'the' profession notwithstanding what he had some passion for. The family shaped the academic self-concept of ability and self-efficacy in this teacher and his motivation to select a teaching profession. SA Teacher 4 explains that he went into teaching through parental verbal persuasions and influence. He explains how he got into the teaching profession:

My father said that teaching is a good profession so I had to undertake that profession. Ja! I was driven by my father so to speak, but afterwards it was out of intrinsic motivation. From within I felt I had to undertake this profession (Zim Teacher 4).

Parental verbal persuasions gave rise to some intrinsic motivation. Such parents may be viewed as having a desire to share power, convincing the child to value what they value or they may want to explore the world with or through the child. Positive persuasions therefore encourage and empower unlike negative persuasions that tend to weaken a person's self-efficacy beliefs. Apart from persuasion, inspiration and emulation emanating from within the family, their teachers formed strong role models. An interview extract below illustrates teacher influence:

... I was largely inspired by my 'A' Level, Mrs. ... emulated what she did I admired the way she taught, the way she taught was simple. She never talked in the native language first no, she was always prepared and knew her stuff, she would switch on to geographical terms straight, that would help me to understand better (Zim Teacher 6).

Students sit in the classrooms for at least thirteen (twelve in SA) years in their school life watching their teachers and this is an important aspect of learning often neglected by teachers themselves in thinking about learner learning. Often overlooked is that the teachers actions and words have a serious impact on their students. The former teacher was an inspiration due to the simplicity of her teaching, use of English, preparedness, possession of both disciplinary and pedagogic content knowledge. This may be viewed as the teacher's competence. Competence is one of the major characteristics of effective role models which make students more likely to imitate them. Such models are always prepared and able to do something correctly. Gordon (1993) discovered that approximately two-thirds of all people who took up teaching had positive influences from their teachers. For such teachers (participants) therefore, teaching is magical as they have experienced magical teachers, who chose careers they have had to assume. Their experiences in their school years provided self-enhancement and a booster for academic self-concept of ability.

Opportunities and Guidance

Other teachers got into teaching due to limited opportunities to get into what they had a passion for. The following interview extract confirms:

Initially I was hoping to be an engineer or a manager somewhere but because of the subject combination at 'A' level, I was forced to get into B A General majoring in Shona and Geography I was so confined to teaching (Zim Teacher 6).

What emerges from the above sentiments is that some of these teachers had no intention of going into teaching in the first place. Opportunities for them to venture into other fields were limited by their 'A' Level subject combinations. In the Zimbabwean education system, qualitative 'A' Level' subjects such as History, Geography, Religious Education, Shona and English in their combinations normally take one into the classroom practice. Thus, from their 'A' Level' choices, there was a likelihood that they would be heading into the teaching profession even before they went into university to read for the BA degrees as reflected in the sentiments below:

...On the job market with BA General there was only teaching. But when I joined the teaching profession in 1997 I began to enjoy teaching and now I'm really enjoying myself to the extent that changing professions is now difficult (Zim Teacher 6).

Upon completion of those teaching related degrees, opportunities were only open for them in the teaching field. What is however encouraging is confirmation by Teacher 6 that after joining the profession, he started enjoying it and does not think of quitting. Teachers further allude to the absence of guidance as a push factor into teaching; "It was also because of lack of professional guidance during that time so I had no option but to become a teacher" (Zim Teacher 2). The programme choices that students make and their aspirations affect their relative chances. These teachers point to lack of informed choices and career guidance, at subject selection and combination stage in Lower Sixth (Form 5) to prepare and channel them appropriately and adequately for higher education and for subsequent competition in the labour market. This aspect of the teacher's work speaks to the SA Norms and Standards for Educators and Zimbabwean teacher attributes. Further, a scenario lacking adequate guidance is detached from one of the major tasks of schools: to assist students to maximize chances that enhance success in higher education and the labour market.

While all Zimbabwean teachers had diverse extrinsic and intrinsic reasons for getting into teaching, for the SA teachers, it was mainly extrinsic convenience reasons as getting 'the job' was difficult. One SA teacher explained; "... so after finishing BSc after 3 years, that's when now I looked at my problems back at home and said let me try something else,

after a year or so I will go to beef up and go into my science field” (SA Teacher 1). For this teacher, while family background might have pulled him into the classroom, the implication is that teaching provided temporary convenience as a stepping-stone into the ‘job.’ There were no expectations of satisfaction in the teaching field. The teacher took up that first choice of post not as realistic in the prevailing circumstances, but aimed instead for another option that called on the skills that he had acquired and developed. Others grabbed opportunities that lay before them: the teachers’ bursary and institutional availability as one teacher pointed out:

Ja! I saw an advert the Funza Lushaka sponsoring teachers. I did BSc but did not get a job, I was still applying so when I saw that advert in the paper, I applied to do this PGCE, then applied to one of the schools in my area and they took me (SA Teacher 3).

I did not choose to be a teacher. Laughs, I hate being a teacher, that’s the bottom line. I was sitting at home looking for work in ‘my field’ and heard of a teaching job in Bergville, so, I went there. Then I started being a teacher but I hate it. I will not stay in teaching ... (SA Teacher 6).

The sentiments expressed above are indicative of extrinsic pull factors that served convenience purposes while scouting around for a ‘job.’ Noteworthy is that financial sponsorship for the programme provided the pull. SA Teacher 6 states upfront that she hates teaching and will not stay in teaching. This may have implications for classroom practice and professional development in the absence of commitment to the profession. The teacher mentions that it was not out of choice and this suggests some push and pull factors in her circumstances that lead her into teaching. Similarly, for all SA Teachers except SA Teacher 5, the push factor was failure to get the ‘job’. The evidence suggests that these teachers went into Higher Education with an eye to subsequent employment in the fields they were studying, hence teaching was used as a stepping stone while scouting around for opportunities and or merely marking time to figure out more suitable options. These teachers thus secured ‘any jobs’, rather than normatively acceptable ‘graduate jobs’ (Purcell & Elias, 2002).

While these comments suggest hanging in there while searching for graduate employment, what was encouraging is that Teacher 1 indicated job satisfaction in the profession and was

likely to remain in the field. Hinchliffe (2002) describes this flexibility resulting from possession of 'transferable' or 'generic' skills. The basic idea is that skills learned in and for one context could readily be transferred to another. With the generic skills individuals succeed in a wide range of different contexts, tasks, or jobs. Hence transferable skills are the kinds of skills vital for effective performance by individuals, not only in one workplace or environment but also in life in general. Such skills are shared by different programmes, employment and careers and bridge the gap from one career to another. Once one has mastered a skill in one field that skill can be transferred easily from that field to another. In this context, the teacher had studied consumer sciences, however due to limited employment opportunities in the field the teacher went into teaching and was able to transfer skills to a different context. Success in effective utilization of transferable skills brings contentment. The next section discusses the intrinsic factors related to motivation and curiosity.

Motivation and Curiosity

Another pull factor into the teaching profession was the intrinsic motivation related to a calling into teaching as reflected in the comments below:

Ah-h, I became a teacher because of providence, because initially I did not intend to be teacher. I wanted to be a lawyer, but then I did not attain the required 'A' level points. I ended up doing a BA which got me into being a teacher, so I just believe I was meant to be a teacher (Zim Teacher 2).

There is admission to having been destined for teaching. While it may also have been the issue of the subminimum required for Law, there is admission of some divine intervention that took her into the classroom. From this perspective, teaching may be regarded as a vocation, where individuals spend their working lifetime performing special, crucial social functions i.e. serving others. Due to the body of knowledge linked to values and needs of society, teachers develop some level of devotion to serve the public, above and beyond financial gains. It is from this conception that teaching may be regarded as having been a divine destination. For one of the teachers, the pull factor into the teaching profession was curiosity to determine what it was like to be teacher. One Zimbabwean Teacher describes his curiosity:

I started teaching in semester break while at the UZ in 1988 out of fun and curiosity... wanted the feel of teaching in my home area, teaching our youngsters. It was interesting. I was supported and respected in my community as exemplary, I enjoyed that. So when I completed my degree, the first job I looked for was teaching (Zim Teacher 6).

The teacher raises a number of issues that attracted him into teaching; fun, curiosity, teaching own youngsters in own community and the joy from support, respect and recognition. While the teacher was curious about the whole issue of teaching, of importance is teaching his own people in his own home area. What may be implied here is the desire to contribute to one's own young people and watching them grow. Hinchliffe (2002) describes this as yearning to be around the young and allowing them to grow on their behalf as they nurture this growth. As this was the community of his birth, community commitment was a commitment to the community of his parents, brothers and sisters and their children.

In addition to curiosity, some positive community affiliation was seemingly instrumental in shaping his beliefs and career interests in teaching. The aspect of curiosity that the teacher raises brings up another dimension, discovery learning. The teacher wanted a taste of teaching, to experience what it means to be a teacher and would only understand by engaging in the practice of teaching. Discovery learning was originated by Jerome Bruner as a personal inquiry-based, constructivist learning strategy that happens in problem-solving occasions as the learner, informed by existing knowledge and experiences, they extract facts, connections and any new truths to be learnt (Clark, 1999) . Through this personal engagement, the teacher discovered on his own what it means to be teacher. A close analysis of the sentiments expressed above may also suggest extrinsic reasons for getting into the field: to enjoy community support and respect and consequently being regarded as a role model.

One SA teacher explained that she went into teaching because she always wanted to be a teacher regardless of the discouragement from family; "...my mum, my little mum was a teacher, she said there is no money here why do you go for this thing teaching I am in teaching... status is very low, why can't you go for something big... but I did not listen ..." (SA Teacher 4). Gordon (1993) contends that despite such discouragement, those

individuals were often determined to succeed. This kind of persistence indicates self-efficacy and determination. The teacher's beliefs and sense of self, as well as the ability and willingness to employ personal persistence to succeed in the teaching field notwithstanding the negative connotations enhance commitment to the profession and to professional development. The comments further reflect what Ramsey (1993) highlights as one of the causes of lack professional functionality, as teachers often fail to conceptualise themselves as professionals.

The community, often due in part, to the fact that teachers themselves exercise a weak professional voice viewing teaching as a lower status profession, also look at teaching in that light. Such factors may imply that teachers feel devalued in their professional work and this may shape their overall morale, job satisfaction and retention as well as classroom practice and professional development. Ramsey adds that teacher professional development provides one critical avenue in which teachers can enhance their status as professionals in the eyes of society in the short-term. Teacher participation in professional development demonstrates to society that teachers value their work as professionals and that teaching constitutes part of a growing profession, incorporating new meaning to refine practices. Notwithstanding family efforts to dissuade the teacher, the sentiments below indicate that teaching to her was a calling:

I always wanted to do a difference in child's life. Then I diverted to BA psychology. But knowing that deep down in me there is thing of teaching I am doing it even at home I teach the young children who are in high school helping them with their work and their feedback, feedback from teachers was like "who is doing this for you it's like she is a real teacher" So I said no this is my job. So I said no I must go for it. Then there I started doing this PGCE (SA Teacher 4).

The teacher's comments above indicate some form of divine calling into teaching - a profession not regarded on the same continuum as other professions even by her family. In describing her feelings, the teacher foregrounds that she wanted to make a difference in a child's life. Kopel (2007) defines this as a desire to shape young minds and lives, assuming responsibility of children under their daily care and capitalizing on the opportunity to make an impression on each learner and guiding and motivating them to make the best of their lives according to their capabilities. Thus SA Teacher 4 through the process of teaching, knowledge transfer, which is intellectual by nature, would shape the young minds

through diagnosing their educational needs, implementing instructional activities and evaluating their progress.

The sentiments that, 'this is my job' suggests internal ownership. This is illustration of commitment to spend the entire working lifetime performing serving others. This aspect meets what Hoyle and Megarry (1987) defined as high level and prolonged education and training intended for the service of others. Teachers possess special knowledge and skills in a wide, organized body of learning derived from education and training and, are primed to exercise such knowledge and skills for the benefit of others (Kopel, 2007). Due to the possession of these obscure bodies of knowledge linked to values and needs of society, teachers develop some devotion to this public service above and beyond financial gains. It is from this quality that the teaching profession may be viewed as a calling. This intrinsic quality of altruism spawns contentment from and commitment to the work of the teaching profession. This resonates with Kopel's (2007) ideas on choosing teaching in anticipation of enjoyment accrued from being with the young and, helping and watching them grow.

From the foregoing discussion, Zimbabwean teachers responded to diverse extrinsic and intrinsic forces to get into teaching. The pull and push extrinsic factors encompassed the pursuit of financial gains to meet family socio-economic needs, experiences with role models within and outside the family, and opportunity limitations due to limited career guidance. The intrinsic factors were related to vocational calling and desire to discover the meaning of teaching through teaching. The SA teachers conversely expressed mainly extrinsic reasons. Teaching provided temporary convenience as a jump-off point while exploring and searching for 'better' options in the graduate fields. While transferable skills become instrumental in such situations, of concern is the fact that reasons for becoming a teacher may shape commitment to the profession, classroom delivery and professional development. The following section therefore discusses why they enrolled in the postgraduate education programmes.

Why the Teachers Enrolled in PGCE/PGDE Programmes

The general goal of teacher staff development is to systematically, deliberately and purposefully enhance knowledge, understanding, behaviour, skills, and values and beliefs in relation to teaching practice (Bandung, 1999). The PUPTs indicated diverse extrinsic and intrinsic push and pull factors as having led them into PGCE/PGDE programmes. The intrinsic reasons were related to motivation to acquire pedagogical knowledge and to address issues of identity. The extrinsic factors were mainly to do with family role models, benefits in terms of job promotion, status and security and increased salary. The following section covers these extrinsic factors.

Family Influences

Zim Teacher 5 highlights family influence as the push factor into PGDE programme as explained here: “PGDE, I was inspired by my brother, a teacher, who said that the PGDE was very important to me and classroom activities” (Zim Teacher 5). Zim Teacher 5 got inspiration from a sibling. As discussed earlier on, the family plays a critical role in career choices and decisions. Prom-Jackson, Johnson et al. (Guskey, 2002) confirm salience of academic socialization practices, such as the belief in education ethic and family support for education. In addressing home and family influence on career choice Kunjufu (1984) discovered that children’s self-concept is learnt and that children react positively or negatively to messages from people around them, which messages they may also experience in other settings, the school for instance. The family unit and dynamics shape a child’s earlier growth and development of personal academic self-efficacy of ability, particularly those who take up a teaching profession. Factors linked to interest in teaching relate to socialization for achievement and parental attitudes towards education, family and financial matters, beliefs in personal ability as conveyed by members of the family, and family role models.

Benefits – Salary

Another push factors had to do with remuneration. While those who were degreed earned higher than the professionally qualified teachers holding diplomas, their other colleagues

with degrees plus a professional qualification were on a higher salary notch: "... my colleagues who had that professional qualification earned higher than me so I decided to engage in such a qualification so that my remuneration could also be raised" (Zim Teacher 1). In lay terms remuneration refers to that which is given to an individual in return for services rendered, inclusive of salary, allowances, benefits, bonuses, etc. Issues to do with remuneration, compensation and rewards are usually sensitive as they touch on teachers' lives. Most governments would look for professional qualifications and experience to award the best gains, as confirmed by Hartley (2007) speaking of SA teachers: "Persons who are professionally qualified and with experience are going to be the big gainers" (p.1). In the Zimbabwean context, upon completion of initial teacher education and training and achievement of teacher status, one is placed on a pay scale updated at the start of each year to enable step by step (notch by notch) upward movement until ceiling level is reached, following which they would move onto a scale associated with a different position or level of experience.

In the context of these teachers, while they earned higher salaries than their colleagues, (graduates from Teacher's colleges) they still earned lower than university graduate counterparts. In the SA context, professionally unqualified practicing university graduates were paid salaries equal to qualified practicing diplomates, a salary below their university graduate colleagues who were notched on a higher grade. The desire to be financially equated to degreed colleagues was an extrinsic push factor onto the PGCE programme. Further, not only did they earn lower salaries, given temporary employment status, but they were also not entitled to government subsidy as reflected below; "Another thing, you cannot get any subsidy for even buying a car... There are no benefits, you are not entitled to benefits" (SA Teacher 6). Subsidy refers to some financial assistance awarded by government as a form of incentive. Given their professionally unqualified status, the teachers were not benefiting from this government gesture. The subsidies were for purchase of properties and cars. For these SA teachers, ineligibility to subsidy implied that they would also miss out on the pending provision of laptop computers to permanently employed teachers in public schools as intimated by Gower and Hoffmann (2009). "The provision of laptop computers to permanently employed teachers in public schools is soon

to become a condition of service ...” (p. 3). Remuneration packages potentially play a significant role in creating incentives for performance, commitment and job satisfaction and retention. The absence of such benefits may impact on classroom practice. Being an Unqualified Temporary Educator (UTE) had other challenges as indicated below:

...The bad thing is you are still temporary until you get the teaching qualification, so we are still earning on the 30th. You can't buy a car, you can't buy a house but it's my 3rd year now but am not permanent yet (SA Teacher 5).

Apart from the lack of entitlements to subsidies alluded to earlier, as non-permanent members of the teaching force, the SA teachers received their salaries on the last day of the month while all other teachers would be paid around mid-month. These teachers would only be made permanent on successful completion of a professional teaching programme.

Promotion

The need to enhance promotional opportunities was another push factor into the programmes as indicated in the comments below:

Without the professional qualification you would not be promoted, so I was only promoted when I started PGDE, that's when I was made HoD Geog and History (Zim Teacher 1).

... eeh you don't have something for education, a teaching qualification, you won't go for a senior post and other benefits you just remain there because you do not qualify (SA Teacher 1).

Worth noting is the fact that professional teaching qualification was the basic criteria for consideration for promotion to posts of responsibility. Being promoted meant advancement and encouragement of progress, which benefits these teachers did not enjoy. As explained in the Zimbabwe Government Amendment Act:

...to promote efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of service to the public, the appointing authority shall, subject to section 2, recruit, advance, promote or grade those members who, in relation to the post in question are most suitable as regards knowledge of the task to be performed and ability to perform it, relevant experience and requisite qualifications (academic and professional) and, qualities ... (2006:7).

Given the above government stance, against the fact that these teachers only possessed academic knowledge, and knowledge of the tasks to be performed, they were viewed as not possessing professional qualifications to operate effectively. Hence they could not be eligible for any higher posts save the HoD posts that some were elevated to upon enrolling for the PGDE Programme.

Opportunities to rise usually make the teacher's long career fulfilling and rewarding. In most cases, upon successful completion of the induction and probation year, a teacher wants to progress further. This not only benefits the teacher through personal and financial gains, but the profession because need will always exist for people taking up senior posts to replace the outgoing for retirements and other causes. Zim Teacher 1 indicates that he was elevated to HoD status only after enrolling onto the PGDE programme. This meets with the conception that one way of ensuring promotion is to engage in staff development aligned to the promotion being sought, sharing knowledge from the course under study with and making interests and aspirations known to those responsible (Network, 2009).

Job Security

Closely related to promotion was the issue of job security. Teachers decided to study further to enhance security on the job as explained below:

Due to this temporary teacher status we had no job security. He was saying the government was going require us to renew our contracts ... (Zim Teacher 6).

When you are not qualified, you are never sure of your job, the principals are always looking out for qualified people (SA Teacher 6).

Lack of job security can bring fear, anxiety and stress but from the CHAT perspective, the contradictory scenario gives rise to creation of opportunities for personal growth and achievement. The situation challenged and positioned the teachers on test, to be resourceful and make ways of enhancing their job security. This would bring satisfaction, a sense of independence and achievement. Montessori (1979) notes that even from the earliest age, man finds the greatest satisfaction in feeling independent. Thus, the greatest feeling of

security emanates from genuine experiences of one's own inherent value, such a sense of self-worth provides a well-spring of strength upon which to draw.

In addition to job security, SA Teacher 5 raises the issue of recognition as follows:

Wanted to be a recognized teacher ... you know the problems if you are not qualified, last in first out, they look at your professional qualification they don't care ...you have to have that qualification of being a teacher (SA Teacher 5).

SA Teacher 5 decided to enrol in the PGCE programme to gain that recognition.

Recognition in this sense is being acknowledged and affirmed within a given setting, in this context within the teaching profession. Recognition or misrecognition makes a powerful weapon for teacher social and professional identity construction and such intrinsic issues often impact on the overall job satisfaction and consequently professional development. Drawing on Snyderman's (1959) in Gawel (1997) two factor theory of job satisfaction, one set of rewards is linked to job satisfaction and the other set contributes to dissatisfaction. Satisfiers, which comprise motivators, are recognition, achievement and responsibility, and work itself. Conversely, dissatisfies, known as 'hygienes' are interpersonal relations with colleagues, superiors and subordinates, policies, personal life, and conditions of service. Given that these teachers did not receive much recognition may have impacted on their morale and job satisfaction as well as job security as they were always the first to be asked to leave the school when that became necessary. Thus, these teachers would always be targets for dismissals as confirmed by SA Teacher 6 below:

Where educators are more than learners in the school (PPN) it's the UTE who is affected and they will ask you to leave. I had problems getting back to my school because the principal had told me not to come back because my post was going to be filled by a qualified person, was only taken back because they could not find a mathematics person ... (SA Teacher 6).

Of concern is the issue of living in fear of losing a job and the uncertainty of regarding a teaching post and location of that posting. Such psychological states involving anxiety, stress, depression, etc. may adversely affect one's self-confidence and self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) notes that typical anxiety linked to an oncoming important event is not necessarily associated with low self-efficacy but provides clues about the anticipated failure or success of the outcome and it differs from these teachers' anxiety. Another

dimension of ensuring job security manifested in the desire to meet policy stipulations of acquiring professional qualifications by 2011. SA Teacher 2 explains; "...also DoE has new rules, by 2011 they won't be allowing people to teach without proper teaching qualifications, so that is partly the reason". Government efforts are targeted towards well-prepared teachers and well designed schools to enhance learner achievement and one strategy is to ensure a qualified teacher in every classroom (Fullan, 1999). But, from sentiments by SA Teacher 2, the qualification may simply be on paper with limited qualitative value to enhance higher achievement. This may be contrary to the general belief that teacher qualifications lead to higher learner achievement. Comments by SA Teacher 2 thus insinuate the value of the qualification as a shield against sacking by the DoE.

Intrinsic Factors - Feelings of Inadequacy

Teachers in this study cited diverse intrinsic professional and personal push and pull onto the programmes, namely: the feelings of inadequacy, identity and labelling and desire to acquire pedagogical knowledge. For the Zimbabwean teachers one push factor related to their self- esteem is given below:

The chief reason for studying further was that I felt inadequate as far as classroom work was concerned. I lacked that professional attachment between teacher and pupils, I did not have it, so I felt so low (Zim Teacher 1).

I felt challenged, I was the only there with a degree, people looked up to me as a resource but they knew much more than I did so I felt pushed and most times I kept to myself and in meetings would not say a word, they were talking of theories I had never heard of, you know Piaget, Bruner etc ... (Zim Teacher 2).

Zim Teacher 1 raises the issue of professional attachment with students. Palmer (1997) notes that the teachers' soul should go into their students, their subject and their way of being together as classroom practice reflects complexities of the teacher's inner life. Thus looking into that mirror as Zim Teacher 1 did, offers the teachers an opportunity to gain self-knowledge. Knowledge of oneself as Palmer (1997) notes is as crucial to one's teaching as profound mastery of their content knowledge and their students. Knowledge of one's students emanates from one's self-knowledge and the knowledge of and attachment to those students. Absence of one's knowledge of self implies absence of knowledge of one's subject and one's students due to the absence of attachment to those students. Not

knowing those students according to Palmer, one cannot teach them well as knowing one's self means knowing one's students and knowing them means being attached to them and thus able to teach and deal with them, a lacking relationship in Zim Teacher 1.

Zim Teacher 2 raises the issue of being a resource person. A resource person is generally viewed as an exceptionally knowledgeable individual usually invited to gatherings to share specific expertise and contribute to the learning of others. They are expected to possess a high degree of preparedness and awareness to keep the discussions and processes on course to achieve appropriate goals. Stephenson (1998) notes that one often keeps to oneself in the background but moving intimately with the debate unless they feel that direction is being lost and there is need for analysis or pulling issues back on track, or when they feel that key issues are not receiving the due emphasis. Also critical is that a resource person is usually flexible, will not force discussion along any predetermined route, but only ask very few questions that create and support open and democratic appropriate decisions and dialogue. Very often the resource person will at the end summarize the discussion, tie up all loose ends and key points together as conclusion to the meeting. On the contrary, Zim Teacher 2, due to the inadequacies usually kept to herself, would not contribute during meetings.

Identity

Another intrinsic push factor was the desire to enhance the self in the eyes of colleagues. The comments below illustrate how these PUPTs were looked down upon and degraded due to lack of professional qualifications:

I felt a void in my professional career, deep down in my heart I felt hurt, I felt inadequate, and you know I felt bad inside, I felt unconfident in my work and in talking to other teachers as they always looked down upon us ... (Zim Teacher 4).

Yes, because if you are not qualified, you have no self-esteem because everyone would say we have done teaching methods at college and I was like ok I don't know about those methods. You don't trust yourself even in class whether you are doing right. If aah learners fail you think oh my god I have done a wrong ... (SA Teacher 5).

Zim Teacher 4 highlights the notion of a void in the professional career. A void in this context may refer to some emptiness, some nothingness or state of non-existence. Given that these teachers were university graduates who were aware that they lacked the professional qualification and would at some point obtain it, the idea of having to be scorned created this vacuum and a feeling of incompleteness. The teachers felt inadequate, unconfident, degraded, looked down upon due to the lack of professional qualification. Further, the lack of knowledge and confidence to engage in dialogues on methods of teaching with colleagues and the awareness of that ignorance spawned further feelings of low self-esteem, lack of confidence, low self-value and unnecessary self-criticism. Status, competence and relationships within institutional settings are strong factors for shaping teacher professional identity (Stephenson, 1998). The way teachers perceive their space in the school community and in relation to their teaching and the way they are perceived by the activity system, shape their identity. Competence in this context refers to academic and professional capabilities and qualifications, how they teach or handle contextual challenges, execute duties, strategize, and manage their teaching activities.

SA Teacher 5 raises the lack of self-worth and a lack of confidence in classroom practice, which consequently shaped her efficacy. Sentiments by SA Teacher 5 seem to tally with observations Podell and Soodak (1993) who posit that low efficacy teachers are often doubtful of their effectiveness and are less likely to persist when working with difficult students. While teachers with high esteem employ mastery experiences for their students, often teachers with low efficacy have higher referral rates of students to other offices (Podell & Soodak, 1993). Again, in the case of SA Teacher 5, absence of diagnostic competence may imply that persistent weaknesses noted in the students' performance remained un-corrected and this may affect the quality of student learning and achievement. In this context diagnostic competence is linked to reflexive competence. Without accurate diagnosis and problem identification, reflection is futile and the teacher retains the state of doubt and perplexity, and is consequently unable to devise strategies to help the situation. Identifying causes of student failure and being unable to identify and isolate the contributory factors renders reflection effective. These feelings of fear shape teacher effectiveness of classroom practice and professional development.

Labelling

Teachers felt hurt because of the labelling ‘temporary’ teacher: “They called us temporary teachers and looked down upon us because we had content only. of course I identified myself with the professionally unqualified because we supported each other” (Zim Teacher 6). A temporary or casual teacher in the Zimbabwean context refers to somebody who is acting, teaching in the interim or assuming the duties of a permanent qualified teacher for the time being or for a limited time pending the return of the professional who may be away on leave or participating in other activities. The position of temporary teacher in Zimbabwe is often assumed by high school graduates from ‘O’ Level or ‘A’ Level who have no other qualification after high school years. Often they take up these positions as a convenient spin-off while waiting or scouting around for something more lasting to engage in. Given that these teachers had after thirteen years of schooling (7 years primary and 6 years secondary), gone into intensive degree programmes in university, being labelled temporary teachers was insulting, hence the feelings of hurt.

Feelings of inadequacy and lack of confidence weaken one’s ability to perform and spawn self-acceptance of inadequacy and incapability as reflected by one Zim Teacher 1 below:

Also, I felt that I was more of a temporary teacher than a professional teacher and this is what I would be labelled. There was a difference between me and my colleagues in the way we taught and handled issues ...

Of concern is the fact that the teacher had now accepted that he was a temporary teacher and that his teaching was different (possibly of lower quality) from that of professionally qualified colleagues. This negative self-value further reduced the teacher’s confidence and capability. Due to these inner feelings of inadequacy emanating from evaluations of colleagues, the teachers regarded themselves as incapable contrary to the fact that growth occurs when one opens oneself up to the challenge from colleagues. Further, these attitudes towards these PUPTs created contradictions within the activity system. Thus these contradictions provided an impetus for engagement in staff development. Zim Teacher 4 indicates identity with the professionally unqualified teachers as they supported each other. Teacher’s social identity shapes that part of their self-concept which incorporates the

following: awareness of membership in a certain social group, values linked with such membership, and the strength and nature of feelings associated with the membership (Podell & Soodak, 1993). Given that these teachers were looked down upon due to lack of professional qualifications, their strong membership was within the unqualified group. They attached value to this group and had strong feelings for the group as they had something in common and therefore provided each other some solace.

Pedagogical Needs

One major intrinsic push factor into PGDE according to all the Zimbabwean teachers was the desire to gain general pedagogic content. The following statement represents the aspect:

I felt I had the knowledge but imparting it, to impart that knowledge, to dish out that knowledge was a problem, I needed to learn approaches and methods in order to help pupils in a professional manner (Zim Teacher 1).

Of importance is the fact that teachers confirm possession of content knowledge and lack of methodology, therefore giving themselves up to learning. This view is in tandem with Yorke and Knight (2006) who assert that disciplinary knowledge alone is insufficient without generic skills i.e. skills to apply and communicate the disciplinary knowledge effectively for learner benefit. Zim Teacher 1 raises the issue of learning teaching approaches and methods to help pupils in a professional manner. Teaching approaches emanate from a teacher's own personal philosophy of teaching and include the nature of education, the role of different stakeholders (teacher, learner, management, parents), how to be an effective teacher and how to foster trust as an educating friend of students. Thus, they make up theoretical positions and beliefs about the nature of content and the applicability to pedagogical settings (Shumbayaonda & Maringe, 2000). Hence to understand one's own day-to-day teaching approaches in classroom practice with students, the above elements make up some of the considerations. Brown (1994) in summary notes that method refers to generalized set of classroom requirements for achieving objectives. All Zimbabwean teachers mentioned the issue of methodology as represented in the sentiments below; "I lacked methodology, I knew most of the stuff to teach but I didn't know the techniques of giving that stuff to students ..." (Zim Teacher 5). Zim Teacher 5

alludes to the notion of techniques of teaching. Techniques are the well-known and used 'little sneaky tricks' to ensure job accomplishment in a classroom context (Driel, Veal et al., 2001). These include rewards and punishment for compliance or misbehaviour.

Methodology means and involves much more than that. Brown (1994) defines the term as the study of the pedagogical practices in the general sense inclusive of theoretical underpinnings and related research. From this conception and in the context of these teachers this encompasses whatever considerations involved in 'how to teach'. Given that these teachers regarded themselves as possessing adequate disciplinary knowledge and simply needed pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), this runs counter to Shulman's (1987) and Yorke and Knight's (2006) ideas that the realms should not be treated in isolation. PCK involves matching teaching approaches with given content and likewise knowing how content elements can be arranged for effective teaching and learning. Thus, these teachers needed knowledge of the interplay of content and pedagogy to ensure understanding how aspects of the acquired content could be adapted, organized effectively, and represented in acting on the object. Zim Teacher 3 indicates problems with lesson preparation and delivery:

I was finding it difficult in preparation and organization of lessons. ...the objectives to be taught, what to be achieved and how to deliver the lesson, how to go about the group activity, what to do, was all very difficult. I had the information but it was difficult to give that knowledge to the pupils, when to interact, when to discuss and when to say now it is time for you work on your own. I did not know ... (Zim Teacher 3).

Of importance is the fact that for Zim Teacher 3, neither of the two domains could be neglected in addressing her challenges. Knowledge of content and pedagogy would still be insufficient as allude to earlier. For the SA teachers, the issue of the intrinsic desire to acquire teaching knowledge was highlighted by only one participant as follows; "I wanted to gain more skills because I know that maybe I am a born teacher so now I wanted to do it professionally, gain skills and get teaching information from someone" (SA Teacher 4). This teacher's comments indicate intention to remain in the profession. The need to acquire teaching information and skills to teach professionally from someone knowledgeable is

also highlighted. Teaching skills may be viewed as strategies a teacher employs to enable student learning and hence may be understood from characteristics of skilful teaching.

While SA Teacher 4 indicates a desire to gain skills and knowledge for professional growth and commitment to the profession, other SA teachers' motives, while they were to do with pedagogical knowledge acquisition, were for extrinsic reasons:

...While still in the school I thought it's better to give them a better knowledge with the good teaching qualification so I did this PGCE (SA Teacher 3).

Well I got the feeling that whilst I am still teaching, I might as well be a proper teacher anywhere (SA Teacher 2).

While these teachers used teaching for convenience, of importance is their desire to perform effectively and be proper teachers while still in the classroom. One should do the best of the basics of teaching while still in practice (Network, 2009). The above discussion indicates that while the Zimbabwean teachers were to benefit through salaries and promotion after PGDE, all of them mentioned the desire to acquire PCK and to address issues of self and identity and labelling. The SA teachers on the other hand expressed the benefits in terms salaries, job security and recognition.

Teachers' Visions

This section discusses where teachers envisage themselves in five years time. All but one Zimbabwean teacher indicated that they would still be in the education field. The teacher who indicated the intention to leave the teaching field mentioned the low salaries in education as the source of disillusionment: "...in other professions which pay handsomely..." Sentiments expressed by the Teachers who indicated commitment to the teaching profession are represented:

... My ambition is to end up being a lecturer in some college; I feel that one day I will be a lecturer with ZOU. I have grown to like my profession I am happy here, something compels me; I feel that I have to go on teaching ... (Zim Teacher 2).

Teachers indicated that they were going to remain in the teaching field but moving on to higher levels than the high school classroom. Such commitment as expressed above

enhances classroom practice and professional development. The level of job satisfaction expressed by teachers has been linked to their perceptions of their work and their students (Lobosco & Newan, 1992). They emphasize teacher preferences for “nice students” from “average” homes, students who are “hardworking” and “intrinsically motivated”, “taking responsibility for their learning” and “respectful and appreciative”. This confirms student expectations and preferences of Zim Teacher 2 when she said “these children are very appreciative because they know I go out of my way to get teaching resources...” The feelings expressed by Zimbabwean teachers reflect commitment to the profession, which may imply existence of the three factors: career commitment, job satisfaction, and quality of work life, all of which are linked to professional development. These factors as well as positive experiences and strong sense of self are likely to have led to job satisfaction and career commitment, thereby influencing a decision to remain in the field of education.

Of the six SA teachers, four indicated that they were ‘hanging in there’ while still applying for other jobs and would leave once they got graduate jobs, “... I hate it (teaching) I don’t like being a teacher, I will leave once I get my proper job...” (SA Teacher 6) and one of them left teaching soon after my 4th meeting with him. On the other hand, two SA teachers indicated that they would remain in education as reflected in the sentiments below:

No!!! I am not going anywhere, this is my job, even staff members support me greatly and they know I am doing my thing! was not shy, I am very confident and even if I deliver a lesson I always know that I will do the best. So it’s where I got the courage to continue (SA Teacher 4).

The teacher indicates commitment to the teaching profession. More encouraging are indications of ownership of the profession (my job, my thing) and a lot of in-school support. Morale is often high and academic and social growth continuous in schools where both students and staff respected, cared for, supported and trusted each other (Sutherland, 1994). Thus institutional factors related to general classroom experiences, interactions with colleagues and students, and the school climate shape job satisfaction, retention and career commitment. SA Teacher 4 draws on her confidence, high self-efficacy and this provides one source of inspiration to continue. The above discussion reveals that the Zimbabwean

teachers would remain in the teaching field while most of the SA teachers would leave once opportunities arose in their field of graduate specialization.

Conclusion

Data analysis indicates both extrinsic and intrinsic factors that landed these teachers in the education field. For the Zimbabwean teachers, role models were instrumental in developing self-concept of ability and self-efficacy and motivation for the teaching career. Other aspects like financial pressures and availability or non-availability of opportunities also provided some pivotal push and pull factors in teaching. The divine vocational calling and an internal desire for discovery were other intrinsic factors in teaching. Conversely, for the SA teachers, teaching was assumed for extrinsic reasons. Most of them took up teaching as temporary convenience and jump off when opportunities arose in their graduate fields of specialization. These push and pull factors shape classroom delivery and professional development.

Content knowledge alone was insufficient for effective classroom performance and high learner achievement, the need to gain both general pedagogical knowledge and PCK pushed the Zimbabwean teachers into the PGDE programme. Other benefits relate to enhancing; salary and promotional opportunities, self-concept of ability and self efficacy in the eyes of others. For their SA counterparts, the general extrinsic reasons addressing benefits, job security and recognition were cited. Teaching was viewed as unable to offer contentment over a long-term, hence teachers were looking for graduate jobs. Thus pedagogical knowledge desired would be instrumental in the short-term. Conversely, the Zimbabwean teachers indicated commitment and job satisfaction in teaching. To them the field apparently offered contentment beyond financial gains, hence the desire to continue offering the social service. However, from another angle, Zimbabwean teachers may have been limited by degree specializations to be able to secure or even think of 'other jobs' external to education.

One issue that teachers did not clearly talk about as a pull or push factor was about rurality.

Chapter 7

Through the Voices of the PUPTs: Research Findings

Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the research findings around four broad domains indicated in Chapter 3 namely: formal, non-formal, informal and experiential. The findings are aggregated and pooled across the twelve participants. This approach was adopted because responses were generally similar among participants though some contextual variations were noted. In such cases I discuss separately the specific findings concerning the particular participants and contexts.

The study revolved around one key question:

How do the professionally unqualified practicing teachers engage in professional development practices in rural secondary schools? This key question was addressed through five sub-questions:

1. What is the nature of professional development practices of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools?
2. How does support by colleagues and the university enhance professional development practices of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools?
3. What are the professional development needs of the professionally unqualified practicing teachers in rural secondary schools?
4. What are the conceptions of the professionally unqualified practicing teachers of their professional development experiences at rural secondary school level?
5. How do the differing contexts at school, system and national level affect the professional development experiences?

In seeking to explain professional development of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools and to address the above questions, this study used two distinct international sites. The unit

of analysis was the twelve teachers as constituted in the activity system. Five themes emerge from both research questions and the generated data:

- The nature of professional development practices that the PUPs engage in rural secondary schools
- How support by colleagues and the university enhance professional development practices in rural secondary schools
- The professional development needs of the PUPs in rural secondary schools
- The conceptions of the PUPs of their professional development experiences
- How the differing contexts at school, system and national level affect professional development experiences

This chapter is organized around these themes. Themes two and five were found to be closely linked to the other themes, hence it was unproductive to present and discuss them separately. Thus, findings regarding these themes are integrated within other themes and filter through the entire discussion. Each theme is introduced and summarized. Adopting a thematic approach does not imply strict boundaries.

The chapter commences with a discussion on the nature of professional development practices through the PGCE/PGDE programmes as sites, and focuses on formal learning. This discussion includes the informal/incidental interactional professional development that emerges as by-products of the structured and planned activities. Findings emerging from professional development within the school site are then presented and analysed. Data presentation and analysis in this section revolves around the two sub-sites of professional development in the school: classroom practice and school meetings. Next is an examination of professional development within wider professional sites namely: specialisation cluster, subject association, and DoE and teacher unions. Findings related to informal professional development through community interactions are discussed next. Each of the four broad sites is summed up by a discussion on related contradictions. This is followed by discussions addressing on sub-questions two, three, four and five which focus on professional development support, professional development needs,

conceptions of professional development and, how the differing contexts shape professional development.

Professional Development through Formal Learning

Learning is generally viewed as change in behaviour emanating from experience.

Psychologists regard learning as that change occurring in the three main realms: cognitive, psychomotor and affective. Given this conception of learning, formal learning is therefore planned learning that derives from activities within structured settings. It is learning typically, provided by and occurring in education institutions, taking place through a teacher-student relationship and structured in terms of learning outcomes, duration, content, methods and assessment and normally leads to certification. It thus involves enrolling on a programme of study, attending lectures, preparing coursework, writing examinations, and engaging in seminar/tutorial discussions in order to achieve cognitive, psychomotor and affective change. Formal learning in this context refers to learning through two programmes of study: the PGDE/PGCE programmes.

Learning through PGDE/PGCE

Teachers highlighted three main dimensions in which they experienced learning through the programmes: lesson delivery, resource utilization and relational dimensions. Each of these is discussed in turn.

Lesson Delivery

Lesson delivery in this section is discussed through its supporting processes: preparation for lessons, teaching strategies and learner engagement, class management and assessment. The last section of this part discusses limited resource utilization.

Preparation for Lessons

Preparation for lessons generally refers to planning and resource development. Lesson planning involves laying out a design, showing how the teacher intends to achieve objectives, and indicating the procedures to follow. From the literature studied

(Shumbayaonda & Maringe, 2000 a lesson plan is a written account of the preparation for a lesson. The following quotes show learning related to preparation for lessons:

After I enrolled for PGDE I noticed a lot of changes, firstly in the lesson preparation. I was taught how to do a detailed lesson plan with SMART objectives, how to write notes, scheme and evaluate a lesson. I can now do those things ... (Zimbabwean Teacher 4).

Actually I am learning a lot in PGCE, they teach us how to do a lesson plan, I am now able to do a rubric - all new things, this is where I benefited rather than the DoE workshops (SA Teacher 5).

This ability to reflect, compare and practice new ways of planning provides evidence that the programmes led to some kind of professional development. Within the CHAT, what a person practices reveals their consciousness (Cole & Engestrom, 1993). What is emerging is that the theory learnt informed practice manifesting in a number of changes related to preparation. Thus internalization occurred out of external activity: there was conversion of external activity into internal activity (Vygotsky, 1987). The PGCE/PGDE programme viewed within the CHAT framework represents the mediating tools that provide the theoretical knowledge, which enables the teacher to act on the object: planning. The teachers gained and internalised the theory, engaged with it, were informed and consequently changed their classroom teaching practice in many ways.

Teaching Strategies

Literature consulted (O'Sullivan, 2004) indicated that unqualified practicing teachers in rural schools needed support and guidance in learner –centred pedagogy, class management and PCK. In the context of this study, teachers explained that they learnt new methods of teaching, which they had since adopted for application in their classroom practice as reflected below:

I now use discovery learning after I enrolled on PGDE, I give pupils some tasks, they research and present and we discuss as class. I have developed in terms of the way I teach, the learner-centred methods ... (Zim Teacher 1).

PGCE has helped me a lot as I am now able to move from one strategy to the other. I try one strategy and may be see that learners are not with me, and then divert right there to another strategy and see if they are catching up ... (SA Teacher 4).

Drawing on the CHAT, the theory-practice connection is evident given that the teacher internalised the theory, reflected on it and used it in the practice and, in discussion and reflection about the practice. Surveyed literature, (Lewin & Stuart, 2003) emphasise the value of immediate integration of theory and practice to enable the marriage of propositional and contextual and situated knowledge of given groups of learners. An amalgam of formal and experiential opportunities is effective in generating professional development as it includes facets of personal, social and experiential professional development (Fraser, Kennedy et al.,2007; Kennedy, 2005). The programme added to the teacher's repertoire of teaching approaches, enabling reflection and evaluation in the practice. Again borrowing from the literature (Caires & Almeida, 2005) evaluation and reflection are areas that enable professional development. Within the CHAT, through this engagement with psychological and material mediational tools and artifacts to transform the object, expansive learning occurs (Roth & Tobin, 2004). These particular issues therefore demonstrate professional development in relation to pedagogy.

There is a strong sense of teacher behaviour change from teacher-centred direct instruction to learner-centred instruction and learner involvement in knowledge construction and knowledge sharing. The implication here is that the theory that was engaged with, informed the practice. Vygotsky's (1987) notion of mediation and learning in activity within CHAT was driven by a desire to foreground the intimate relationship and interdependence of the mind and the world (intellectual and practical). This interdependence is reflected in the comments above. The general trend in the Zimbabwean teachers, indicates that the programme shaped their interaction with learners:

... I now know how to involve learners, they discuss in their groups, they participate fully, I only guide them and lead the discussion. There is much pupil involvement in the lesson. You end up sharing ideas with them and they help each other through pupil-to-pupil interaction ... (Zim Teacher 3).

I must say ZOU PGDE has opened me, my eyes in teaching/learning aspect, they taught me that to make teaching/learning effective, I must involve students because at the end of the day they are learning and if they discover on their own, they will remember the information, they are going to write the exams. So I have learnt a lot from PGDE (Zim Teacher 4).

Given that internalisation can only manifest itself in external practical actions performed by individuals as understood from CHAT, the PUPTs' ability to externalise, transformed the internalised actions into external ones i.e. putting the actions into practice.

Teachers allude to sharing ideas in two dimensions: amongst learners, and between learners and the teacher. This reflects collective learning with and from the activity system through engagement in activity as emphasised by CHAT. The teachers point to learning related to content and pedagogy as well as PCK. There is a realized strong link between discovery learning and long-term memory and knowledge retention. Knowledge retention in this context refers to remembering some proportion of the knowledge after a period. This realisation has resulted from professional development through the programme. Again as understood through CHAT in Figure 3 the programmes provide the mediating tools through theory, which enables acting on the object and, results in its transformation.

Class Management

One area of development highlighted by the teachers was to do with class management and control. This interview extract represents the Zimbabwean teachers' views: "I am now able to control truant pupils and those with problem backgrounds, now know that apart from corporal punishment, manual work, exclusion from class ... can counsel them, guide them, which I learnt from PGDE" (Zim Teacher 2). There is acknowledgement that the teacher gained knowledge related to class management and learner discipline. The heightened awareness of alternative approaches and intervention strategies of handling learner discipline, misbehaviour and other disciplinary issues demonstrates the theory-practice link where what happens conceptually is not isolated from practical activity as emphasised by CHAT. From the consulted literature (Zehava & Salman, 2008) sharing and discussing learner discipline problems with the learners and their parents is effective minimizing such problems.

Assessment

Another area highlighted is to do with assessment. The following comments are characteristic of the sentiments expressed by Zimbabwean teachers:

They are now scoring more marks than they used to do, now performing better and I attribute that to PGDE. The record reflects that when most of the students started upper 6th, they were not performing. But the performance is improving, you look at these tests I gave on the 5th June. Most of them performed well ... (Zim Teacher 6).

Learning having occurred is discernible in the performance of learners. The improved learner achievement may have resulted from modified or new methods/teaching strategies. Through the mediating tools in the PGDE as viewed through CHAT, the teacher gained and internalised the theory, reflected on and adopted it both in the practice and in discourse, revealing externalization of what was learnt and expansive learning to have occurred. Learning culminated in effective teaching and consequently improved practice, which manifesting in improved learner achievement. This evidence of professional development through the programme is likely to have spawned change in the teachers' beliefs regarding the programme. Drawing on the literature in Chapter 3, significant change in teacher attitudes and beliefs only occurs subsequent to observable improvements in student learning (Guskey, 2002).

One dimension of professional development related to assessment was through developing assessment items as shown by Zim Teacher 6:

...With PGDE I have realized that written work is very important because it is a means of giving feedback to the various activities undertaken. Also, I found that the frequency of written work is very important. ... I have developed a lot professionally. Even the quality of marking and setting of tests, before PGDE programme, the questions I set were not well structured, I mixed high order and low order questions ... I could start by high order questions because I did not know how to set a test, with PGDE I realize that the level of difficulty increases as the questions progress.

Teachers became aware of the value of assessment generally and as it relates to the frequency and timeous provision of informative feedback. The notion of high order and low order questions draws on Bloom's taxonomy for measuring the level of learning that students should demonstrate on some written work. The important issue here is that the implied reference to Bloom demonstrates a theory-practice connection and the internalisation/externalisation as viewed from the CHAT perspective. The theory learned

on the PGDE was internalised and then used in the teachers' reflective discourse as well as in the practice itself.

Lesson delivery through its supporting processes i.e. preparation for lesson, teaching strategies and learner engagement, class management and assessment, all demonstrate professional development. What emerges in relation to CHAT and also noted by Billet (2008) is that two basic but dynamic processes, internalisation and externalisation exist in learning through activity. In all instances discussed above, internalisation and externalisation occurred in the sense that after acquiring new theoretical understandings (internalisation) they started to view the new aspects differently thereby adopting and employing these new understandings in subsequent classroom activities.

Given the gross under-resourcing in some of rural school contexts, teachers realized some professional development in this regard. This aspect is discussed in the next section.

Use of Limited Resources

Learning is further realized in relation to teaching within limits of scarce resources. Zimbabwean teachers indicated that they had acquired knowledge and skills related to effective teaching/learning within limitations of under-resourcing. Their sentiments are represented in this comment: "But like I said, I am empowered. PGDE taught me the art of using the little resources that we have. I have to be resourceful, creative, innovative being able to improvise, and I think I am achieving that, my practice means search for resources, teacher and pupils bringing something" (Zim Teacher 2). Teachers appreciated their limited contexts with regard to resource provision. Literature studied in this inquiry (FAO, 2005; Mulkeen, 2006) indicated that the major challenges confronting rural schools are to do with under-resourcing. Also noteworthy, was the fact that teachers confirmed the ability to operate effectively within those limited activity systems, which implies some professional development. Further implied within rural school settings were aspects of creativity, resourcefulness, innovativeness, initiative and improvisation, which were regarded as crucial. This ability to examine situations, weigh alternatives, come up with ways of addressing them is regarded as manifestation of expansive learning within the

CHAT framework. Effectiveness of such empowerment (internalization) could only be revealed and measured against practical action (externalization). The next section focuses on the PUPTs' professional development experiences with regard to relations.

Relational Dimensions and Collaboration

Relational dimensions in this section focus on relations, attitudes and empowerment. There are indications that teachers developed professionally from discussions and reflections with regards to relations. They developed new and appropriate relations with colleagues and management within their activity systems. The explanations offered below point to gains in that regard:

I began to discuss with colleagues and work collectively in the department. PGDE taught me the value of teamwork to realize departmental goals. I began to act as a professional, relating well to administration, prior to PGDE it was not a handsome relationship... did not know why they were there. But with this intensive programme I realize that I should respect superiors in as much as they should respect me, so we relate closely in whatever we do. So I also have developed professionally in that respect (Zim Teacher 4).

Yes it is all now different ... teaching is now different, we are learning a lot in PGCE, how to deal with staff, children, the community, so everything we are learning, so it's different the approach now I have to people is different. It's better now that I have learnt (SA Teacher 3).

Such collaboration through valuing respect, teamwork, collaboration and collective engagement in an activity system enables achievement of the shared object. Within the CHAT theoretical framework in this study, engagement in activity can only effectively occur in the presence of the triad i.e. subject, object and, tools and artifacts and, each unit performing their role according to the division of labour within that community. Further the units or nodes should operate within the parameters of socio-historical rules and regulations within the activity system. This new awareness provides clear evidence of professional development through the programme. The acknowledgement viewed in CHAT imply an awareness of the shared object and that failure to perform by any one node of the activity system affects global system performance, leading to lower achievement of the object by the entire system. The activity, which provides the central issue here, is to teach and this is what connects the subjects to the collective activity and the object to enact

and transform is teaching practice. This capacity to work with others through interdependence, drawing on and aligning with others expands the PUPT's own object of activity. Interdependence and interpersonal agency are also confirmed by Zim Teacher 3; "From PGDE I learnt that teaching means sharing, teachers sharing and kids also sharing amongst themselves. It means teacher-teacher relationship and pupil-pupil relationship." Engagement with the mediating tools through the programme has resulted in multi-level interdependence and agency - collegial, teacher-learner and learner-learner sharing. Collegial sharing in this sense refers to sharing intellectual mediating tools and artifacts and sharing teaching loads, which fosters effective teaching/learning. The interpersonal interdependence and agency organized around teaching/learning, teacher reflection and collective practice resemble what literature consulted (McLaughlin, 2008) describes as knowledge collectives where resources, responsibilities and learning are shared. In CHAT, relational interdependence involves both learning from each other and exploring the activity jointly (Billet, 2008). This view acknowledges the notion of the activity system where the subject-object relation is not only mediated by psychological and material tools and artifacts, but also by the community and division of labour.

Formal learning through PGCE/PGDE gave rise to professional development, which to some extent altered the PUPTs' attitudes as discussed in the following section.

Attitudes

Teachers confirm a new understanding of what teaching is all about. The following interview contribution represents how Zimbabwean teachers felt: "At first I did not understand what it means to be a teacher. I felt that since I had a degree, I knew much in my area, but in the PGDE programme, it is not important to show-off knowledge, but to share it with colleagues and put it across to students appropriately" (Zim Teacher 5). Content knowledge alone is now viewed as insufficient unless appropriately shared with colleagues and imparted to learners. Viewing the comments through the CHAT lens, as new understandings emerge through activity, old norms and values are abandoned giving way to new goals and practices (Billet, 2008). Engagement with psychological and material tools brought about by the PGDE/PGCE led to internalisation then giving rise to viewing the profession differently and understanding what it means to be a teacher. This is

evidence of professional development. In the context of this study, developing an understanding of what a teacher and teaching are all about implies a realization of the professional and moral commitment and obligation to serve students and the community. Further, to these teachers, the programme meant acquisition of the pedagogical skills necessary for the teaching profession. The comments below, which are reflective of the general trend amongst the Zimbabwean teachers, illustrate this point:

To me it (PGDE) means acquiring the very skills supposed to be used in your teaching career, to understand, the skills or tools needed. PGDE made me understand and practice what teaching is all about. PGDE courses hinge upon my profession, they equip me to effectively engage in the classroom practices - these are the very tools to enable you or license you to teach. Once you know those foundational aspects, you know your professional job (Zim Teacher 1).

I was made to think teaching is not a proper profession, but something, which could be done even by a layman. But after joining PGDE, definitely there has been a change of attitude and belief. I now regard teaching, I now see it as a profession with methods, content, ethics and skills to be learnt, many skills (Zim Teacher 4).

The new and different perceptions of the teaching profession in these teachers juxtaposed with CHAT imply expansive learning. Miettinen (2006) notes that the capacity for interpreting and expanding the definition of the object of activity and, responding to it in increased and enriched ways implies expansive learning. This confidence to declare openly their prior conceptions and the current heightened realization of and dialogue about the value of the programme point to both internalisation and externalisation in activity, which demonstrates professional development. What comes through clearly is that teachers have developed positive views and attitudes to the teaching profession following enrolling on the PGDE programme. From Guskey's (2002) model, success in bringing about significant change in teacher's attitudes and beliefs emanates from clear evidence of improvement in the achievements of their students. Given that these teachers earlier on declared that performance of their students improved following enrolment on the PGDE, this may have contributed to the change in attitudes and beliefs.

Empowerment and Decision-Making

In simple terms, empowerment refers to having some sense of where one is going as well as being able to choose how to get there thus, autonomy to make decisions. Teachers were now able to determine their actions and those of their learners in their classrooms. The following comments were generally made:

I feel empowered. I can decide with confidence what to do with my pupils, because of this programme. You make informed decisions, with the PGDE programme I can now argue my course of action for the good of my students (Zim Teacher 2).

Through PGDE, you start to love the profession you will be having so much confidence. I am now going to be qualified professionally, so I am confident and happy ... can even engage in a discussion confidently with colleagues something I never did before (Zim Teacher 1).

Empowerment may have emanated from the fact that they realized personal and professional growth and development and feelings of acceptance, personal security and independence within themselves. This positive self-view probably fostered their confidence manifesting in some amount of autonomy in their classrooms. From the literature surveyed (Gordon, 1993) such feelings of self-efficacy prompt creation of own reality and a sense of power over one's life and practices. Given that the Zimbabwean PUPTs felt looked down upon due to lack of professional qualifications, confidence may also have emanated from the thought of becoming professionally qualified. This was a pleasurable thought, which generated love of the profession. Further, confidence also probably emanated from having acquired PCK and the ability to apply that knowledge in classroom practice. This, according to Graven (2004) is mastery in relation to becoming a professional teacher, which involves becoming confident in one's professional knowledge for teaching, participation in professional activities, membership in a range of professionally related activity systems and one's identity as a professional teacher.

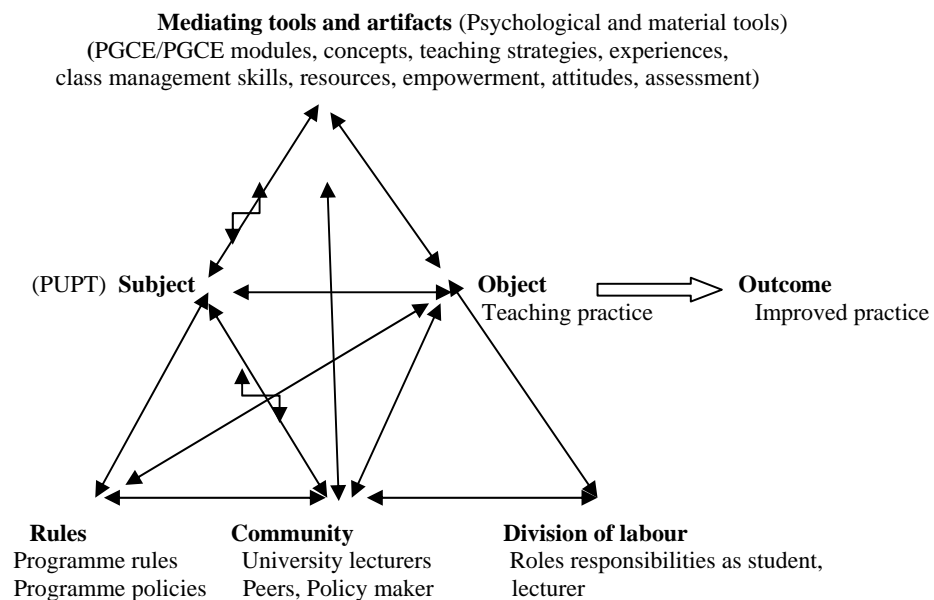
This section has indicated that some professional development related to lesson delivery occurred in these teachers through the two basic processes, internalisation and externalisation through the formal domain: PGCE/PGDE programmes. This professional

development altered the PUPTs' attitudes. Learning was also realized in relation to use limited resources, relational dimensions, attitudes and beliefs and, empowerment. Operating with limited resources creates contradiction, given that resources constitute the tools and artifacts that mediate acting on the object.

Contradictions

Applying the conceptual framework CHAT, the PGCE/PGDE programmes provide the mediating tools and artifacts that enable the subject to act on the object, teaching practice, which is then transformed into an outcome, improved practice through continuous practice. In Figure 3, the elbow double arrow connectors represent the space through which contradiction exists; between the subject and, tools and artifacts and, between the subject and community. The contradictions are discussed in turn in the following section.

Figure 3: Professional development through formal learning



What we have seen is that within the formal learning component, from the description of the teachers, this is how the activity system has worked in order to achieve the outcome of improved practice. The aspects: teaching strategies, class management, assessment, attitudes, empowerment and decision-making, and other resources all constitute the meditational tools and artifacts. Rules represent the acceptable norms and practices, in this case ministry policies, the university and programme policies, which should be observed in

acting on the object. The community represents the university lecturers, PGDE/PGCE peers and policy makers who provide the mediating tools and artifacts and the division of labour are the roles and responsibilities shared by the different community members. All these aspects impact on the object in order to generate the outcome. However, that ideal does not exist in all the contexts and there are a number of situations in which contradictions emerge. The issue of limited resources i.e. tools and artifacts created a contradiction. However, viewed in juxtaposition with CHAT, contradictions are not inherently bad but, generate occasions for change and development. From the CHAT, the ability to devise ways of modifying and addressing the contradiction through creativity, improvisation, and innovativeness in their classroom practices gave rise to professional development.

While four of the six SA participants indicated development through the PGCE programme, two teachers gave contrasting comments as shown below:

My teaching now while on PGCE programme, there is no difference. I don't feel any change, Ja (laughs) I am doing PGCE just to get that certificate, that's really the point you know, there is no difference between me and them. But in terms of actual teaching, Ja! anyone can teach if given a textbook, it's more of transmitting textbook knowledge to kids. It's not about what to teach or how you to teach, what you need is a textbook and you will be able to teach if you just put yourself to it (SA Teacher 6).

Ja I feel I am just here for the paper, when you get your paper, well you are out. It's about getting the paper there is not much to learn in PGCE. Well it is just to be qualified because the government has said by 2011 everyone must be fully qualified (SA Teacher 2).

These teachers were almost through with the second and final year of PGCE but confirmed a lack of learning since enrolment on the programme. From the comments, to be qualified meant a certificate for use as job security come 2011 when the government would only hire certified teachers. This was the push factor into the programme. While there was no further evidence to support the above sentiments, this whole picture spawned contradictions between policy and practice. The flow of contradictions may be understood from Figure 3 above illustrated by elbow double arrow connectors. Contradiction emerges between subject and community. While the community (policy) expects the subject to acquire pedagogical knowledge and skills, the teachers' aim to get the 'piece of paper', creates a

mismatch with the community as policy regards teacher qualifications as linked to education quality. Authors consulted in the study (Southworth & Campbell, 1992) point out that professional development occurs only when individual teachers admit to a need and, are open and prepared to learn. The more they view learning as vital for their professional life and development, the more they will learn and take advantage of the learning opportunities before them. Given that the teachers are not open to acquiring the appropriate skills and knowledge for effective classroom practice, their utilization of tools and artifacts (psychological and material resources) to act on the subject as seen in CHAT, is likely to be limited, thereby creating contradiction.

Conclusion

While the Zimbabwean teachers acknowledge experiencing professional development in many aspects on the PGDE programme, their SA counterparts on the overall imply limited experiences. The Zimbabwean teachers confirmed experiences with regard to content, pedagogy and PCK from dialogue on lesson preparation, but for the SA teachers, professional development linked to lesson preparation was limited to two participants. The PUPTs further experienced professional development to do with assessment and evaluation, inclusive of marking, recording marks, provision of developmental feedback and reporting on learners.

Further, teachers experienced learning related to teaching strategies. Through this engagement they gained content, pedagogy and PCK as it relates to learner involvement in knowledge construction. The implication is that internalization and externalization occurred thus confirming the existence of activity in two forms: mental and material, which mutually control and penetrate each other (Vygotsky, 1987). Through dialogues, teachers experienced reflection on their practice and about their practice. The formal debates and discussions enabled the PUPTs to relate content, pedagogy and PCK to class management and control, learner discipline and learner behaviours in diversity. Through the experiences, Zimbabwean teachers confirmed empowerment and confidence in decision-making in their classrooms. Other debates on collaboration, interpersonal

interdependency and agency, limited resource utilization, and growth in relation to attitudes further enabled some professional development.

The next section discusses professional development through the process of doing.

Professional Development within the School

The school as a site provides for professional development through two vehicles: experiential through the process of teaching and structural through meetings. These two aspects are the focus of this section. Experiential learning in this context encompasses: supervision and mentoring, and lesson preparation and delivery, these are discussed in the first section. There follows a description of professional development experienced through the school structures, which involves whole school, specialization, management and assembly meetings.

Professional Development through Experiential Learning

In general terms, experiential learning is a process of meaning making through direct experience. Unlike formal learning discussed in the previous section, experiential learning focuses on the learning process for the individual (Stavenga de Jong, Wierstra et al., 2006). Hence, it requires no teacher, but is mainly a knowledge construction process of the individual's experience. Teachers in this study indicated experiences of professional development through the hands-on process in classroom practice. The hands-on experience revolved around supervision and mentoring, lesson preparation and delivery, and pastoral roles. Broadly, within the CHAT framework, experiential learning is a tool for enacting on the object. From some of the scholars consulted (Russell, 1988) the only way to learn how to teach is through hands-on experience in teaching practice. Russell therefore concluded that experience and teaching practices shape the meaning, and the relationship between theory and practice make two alternate segments of a single activity.

Supervision and Mentoring

Supervision generally refers to well conceived specialist advice, propositions, discussions or sets of alternatives directed towards promoting the professional and personal growth and improvement of teachers. In this context and from the CHAT framework, supervision is a

psychological mediating tool, which together with other tools mediates action of the subject on the object to transform it. Supervision in this section is discussed under two aspects: document and lesson supervision.

Five of the Zimbabwean teachers indicated existence of supervision of teaching documents in their schools to ensure maintenance of appropriate standards, and for guidance. From a Zimbabwean perspective, teaching documentation refers to the scheme of work, the lesson plan and record of marks. The record of marks corresponds with the written tests and/or exercises in the students' exercise books. The teachers' comments are represented below:

If you look at these lines and those ticks and this comment here, they were put by the deputy head (Deputy Principal), following up on the evaluation documents. They are supervised after every 2 weeks also by the HoD. It's a school and ministry requirement ... They pick up from any anomalies in our evaluation and reflection, this is where you indicate students who need additional help and they follow up next time ... it is good because they write comments like here (showing) I learn from these comments and it helps me professionally, I reflect more and keep up to date with my work (Zim Teacher 6).

The supervision process while it was “a school and ministry requirement” to ensure maintenance of appropriate standards through constant scrutiny of the documents, this resonates with findings by some authorities (Putz, 1992; Vonk, 1995) surveyed in the literature in Chapter 3 where PUPTs needed and benefitted from administrative and supervisory support which they described as essential for their professional development, effective teaching and job satisfaction. While this practice may be linked to a scientific management system where teachers are expected to have up to date documentation, mark students' exercise books, return them promptly and produce high pass rate, through supervision (Shumbayaonda & Maringe, 2000) teachers confirmed development in both pedagogy and content as well as PCK. However, one Zim teacher gave contrary comments about supervision at her school due to an absence of such guidance. The teacher's comments are discussed in the section on contradictions.

Interview extracts from SA teachers show diversity with regard to document supervision, with only two teachers confirming supervision in their school contexts. However, that type of supervision was not apparently professionally developmental as indicated in the comments; “Ja! Documents are supervised at day 9 in the cycle by the HoD. So they are

seen every month with the activities, rubrics and memorandums. They just sign the control sheet, they don't write anything, it only helps us to keep up to date with work, they don't give us any comments" (SA Teacher 5). What this suggests overall for the SA PUPTs is that there was no professional development related to document supervision. Such supervision fostered professionalism in the sense that teachers maintained up to date preparations to meet this 'check and control' mechanism. Other than that, supervision did not serve developmental purposes. Drawing on literature (Shumbayaonda & Maringe, 2000) the approach may be aligned to neo-scientific management where supervisors simply check to ensure that duties are being performed according to the laid down procedures and expectations. Viewed against the CHAT, subject/community, subject/rules and subject division of labour contradictions will not emerge as the subject fulfils requirements according to the demands of the activity system.

Five of the Zimbabwean teachers alluded to benefiting from lesson supervision by either HoD or deputy/head. Their comments are represented below:

Every term I have two lesson observations by HoD Deputy/Head apart from mentor observation. These are very useful, you sit down and discuss and you grow from feedback and advice on your performance, they encourage you very much ... when they have time, you sit down even before the lesson to discuss the lesson, and then again after the lesson, it help us ... (Zim Teacher 6).

The supervisory lesson observations made by the mentor, HoD and/or deputy/head were beneficial through feedback on the lesson. The three-stage cycle clinical supervision: pre-lesson observation conference, lesson observation and post-lesson observation conference confirms earlier findings (Reddy, 2003; Field, 1994) where unqualified practicing teachers placed great value on the pre and post-lesson observation conferences. The pre-lesson observation conference enabled the supervisor and supervisee to discuss the 'what' 'when' 'why' and 'how' of the lesson. Further, literature (Chakanyuka, Mukeredzi et al.; 2006) indicate that in pre-observation, observation and feedback, supervisors assist student teachers to learn from their own practice. Through this engagement, some professional development occurred.

An absence of lesson supervision was noted in the SA school contexts. One teacher pointed out that she hated being observed, albeit she acknowledged the developmental value of supervision. She explained: "...I don't want to be observed, I don't like it, I hate it ... it makes you nervous" (SA Teacher 4). Thus lesson supervision for the SA teachers was limited to university lecturers and through mentoring where such structures were in place. In the context of this study, the PUPT may be regarded as the mentee (one who is mentored) and mentor is understood as an experienced professional, responsible for the growth and supervision of the PUPT. Kerry and Mayes define a mentor as "... a person of greater rank or expertise, who teaches, counsels, guides, develops and nurtures professional growth of a novice in an organization ..." (Kerry & Mayes, 1996).

Comments by Zim Teacher 3 represent teachers' descriptions of their professional development interactions with mentors: "... my mentor is very helpful, very supportive. She is my teacher that one; and conducts demonstration lessons for me, she observes my lessons. We do team teaching, she is a critical friend .We also talk about other things social, economical, I am always learning." Being a teacher denotes provision of knowledge through teaching/coaching and through continuous dialogue and development of personal relationships. Modelling the lesson enabled the PUPT to learn from the mentor's practice in three clinical phases: pre-lesson observation conference, observation and post-lesson observation conference as discussed above. Drawing on literature, (Chakanyuka, Mukeredzi et al.; 2006; Kerry & Mayes, 1996) the mentor is portrayed as someone the mentee could emulate, who provides some sense of what they were attempting to become, the standard measure in professional practice, who stimulated growth and development in the mentee. Critical friendship is usually understood in relation to action research, my inclination is that Zim Teacher 3 implied a close friend who provided a shoulder to lean on.

The idea of team teaching fulfilled another mentoring function where mentor and mentee engage in specific tasks which foster and enable knowledge and skill acquisition at a co-equal level from joint mentor/mentee practice.

We collaborate on almost everything, scheming, planning, teaching, giving tests and marking. She writes reports for ZOU, she would always ask me to do

a critical self-assessment after a lesson before giving her own assessment. This has made me grow and develop (Zim Teacher 4).

She helps me even with planning, we share new things, learn together (SA Teacher 5).

Ideas of collaboration which benefitted the PUPT to discover what is taken into account are the focus of CHAT through its emphasis on learning in joint activity. At the lesson delivery stage either one or both deliver on different components of the lesson and this fosters mentee professional development through the joint practice. Collaboration to do with assessment promoted joint critical reflection and professional development. Further, aspects of self-assessment provide evidence of professional development through constructive self-criticism, a vital component for professional development given that where one admits to own weakness, one opens up to new learning as noted in the literature (Southworth & Campbell, 1992).

One dimension of mentoring support was through lesson supervision discussed earlier. The Zimbabwean teachers worked with mentors for the entire duration of their programme. On the contrary for the SA teachers this support was limited to the period of teaching practice as indicated by SA Teacher 5: “She encourages me but after TP she does not work with me, but I have learnt during that period.” However, notwithstanding the short duration of mentor/mentee relationship, the process benefitted them. The aspects of encouragement, in this context may refer to promoting and nurturing professional growth. Mentors and colleagues are viewed as having a significant influence on PUPTs’ orientations, dispositions, conceptions and classroom practices (Kettle & Sellers, 2003). Professional development through specialization meetings interpreted through CHAT foster collective learning with and from colleagues at the equal collegial echelon. This historic-sociological concept of CHAT as enabling movement from inter psychic to intra psychic development and occurring through interaction, collaboration and modelling focuses on learning and development through collective activity mediated by means.

The comments by Zimbabwean Teacher 5 below represent a pattern that all respondents mentioned, which suggests that professional development occurred through collaborative

problem solving: “Whenever I have got a challenge, he will help me. He has been my mentor throughout the PGDE programme overseeing my development. Seeing how he handles student problems helps me to grow through the process.” Scholars consulted in this study; (Kerry & Mayes, 1996; Kettle & Sellers, 2003) suggest that one dimension of overseeing, protecting and nurturing is through ensuring a safe, challenge-free environment and caring for both professional and other forms of development. Overseeing and nurturing suggested by ‘whenever’ ‘throughout the programme’ implied an on-going process where the mentor (nurturer) witnessed ability development and maturity in the nurtured PUPT through tasks performed and dispositions displayed.

In addition, the mentor provided some point of reference as indicated by SA Teacher 3: “I always also ask her about other personal things. Seemingly it’s like she has all the information. She is a friend ... we also talk about other things social, economical, I am always learning.” The mentor is portrayed as the knowledgeable ‘other’. One presupposes that this was both content, pedagogic knowledge and PCK. Being knowledgeable and competent are vital qualities of an effective model. The description suggests an on-going practice of consultation and information sharing as the mentor ‘had’ all answers to questions. The definition resembles discoveries made by Talmor, Nabel-Heller et al. (1996) where the school head and HoD were viewed by student teachers as the most significant individuals in the school, who possessed solutions to problems and answers to questions. Only two of the six SA teachers confirmed being mentored during the TP period. The remaining four participants contrarily indicated an absence of such support structures in their activity systems.

This section has shown that supervision and mentoring support foster professional development. All the mentoring support as viewed within CHAT, provide occasions for the movement from inter psychic to intra psychic development which occurs in mediation, interaction and collaboration which notion encompasses ZPD and transition to ZAP. Mentoring therefore provides tools and artifacts which enable the subject to act on the object, teaching practice, and consequently transform it to an outcome improved practice. The following section focuses on lesson preparation.

Preparation

While preparation is a theoretical aspect, the decision to discuss it at this point draws on the fact that preparation is a supporting component of lesson delivery. Preparation in this context encompasses development of scheme of work and lesson plan. These aspects are covered in the first section. There follows a discussion on supervision of preparation documents and lessons. The third section focuses on lesson delivery and pastoral roles conclude the section.

With regard to the scheme of work, Zimbabwean teachers indicated that the first step in preparation is developing a scheme of work. Brown and Brown (1990) view a scheme as a more detailed plan than a syllabus, comprising what is to be taught and describing when and how that teaching should occur. From a Zimbabwean perspective, it involves breaking down syllabus topics into narrower, teachable units and developed for a term, month or just a number of weeks. The scheme thus advises on what materials or texts and methods/strategies are to be used as well as the activities for learner engagement. Given this conception, the process of scheming enables professional development experiences related to content, pedagogy and PCK. Drawing on the above, from the CHAT perspective, the scheme represents both psychological and material tools and artifacts. The following interview extract illustrates this point:

Actually it begins with developing a school syllabus from the national syllabus. I scheme for a term during the holiday from the school syllabus. I get topics in the school syllabus, then I scheme, sequencing topics related and closely linking them so that students understand the information... you develop through doing this process (Zim Teacher 2).

These comments represent a particular trend mentioned by all the Zimbabwean participants. Through the scheming process of selecting materials, matching content with pedagogy to develop PCK, professional development is enhanced. This preparatory stage as viewed against the 2nd Generation of CHAT represents an individual activity which, while social is not necessarily collective (Hardman, 2007). Literature surveyed (Shumbayaonda & Maringe, 2000) note that a lesson plan forms the immediate translation of the scheme of work into action, showing a summarized version of how the lesson will

proceed. This planning activity provided an avenue for professional development. The quotation below represents the teachers' sentiments:

I summarize important concepts required for pupils to master using various books, sometimes ask colleagues for information. I revisit my scheme and my strategies, make sure that I really know what I am going to do with the pupils when I go to the classroom. I also look at past exam questions asked on that topic. This is learning because it's like making a guide for a journey, which shows you how you move from one point to the other. That's why I like it, you know, you never go wrong, and you will not forget any step and I always go through it (Zim Teacher 4).

Interdependency and agency are evident through sharing mediating tools and artifacts. The CHAT framework emphasises personal agency and interdependence, defining this interchange as being a resource for others while drawing on others' as resources during collective engagement in activity (Engestrom, 2004). The object of the activity at this point is preparation of a scheme of work /lesson plan through mediation by knowledgeable 'other' i.e. colleagues, the school syllabus and other material as well as psychological tools and artifacts. However, when it has been prepared it becomes a mediating tool. This is illustrated in Figure 4. There is evidence to indicate that there is some professional development experienced through the planning process. Given that lesson preparation enables professional development, the next section examines lesson delivery.

Lesson Delivery

Lesson delivery in this section focuses on group work and feedback. Lesson delivery in the context of this study is the object of activity, which is achieved through mediation by tools and group work and assessment form part of the psychological and material tools.

Teaching is basically by group work as classes are composed of more than one student. Given this conception, small students' groupings within the large classroom group is the subject of discussion in this section. In this study, group work emerged as the popular tool with the Zimbabwean participants whose comments are represented by Teacher 1: "Work that is very difficult work to conceptualise I use group work to build on the concept so that everyone contributes. I learn through this, because I have to know which concepts are

difficult. We make effective use of our limited resources.” These comments confirm literature surveyed (McLaughlin, 2008) which suggests that experiential professional development through classroom practice as ‘teaching/learning for understanding’ which relies on the teachers’ abilities to view complex subject matter against learner learning levels and diversity and, school/classroom context. Further, borrowing on literature (Shulman 2004) given that the goal of education is to enable students to construct their own meaning of specific content, the teacher provides learning activities that promote meaning making. Thus engaging learners in knowledge production through group work demonstrates such awareness. Viewing this through the CHAT framework, the ability to determine and decide on appropriate topics and strategies and, to employ group strategy to address shortages of reading materials implies the dynamic learning and practice strategies of internalization and externalization. Again, from the CHAT perspective, such a strategy to address resource shortage contradictions offers an opportunity for change and development.

All teachers emphasized close monitoring of group activities to enhance effectiveness. Their sentiments are represented SA Teacher 5: “I move around helping and keeping them active, monitoring and assisting, you have to make sure that they are in the subject. I have to make sure everyone is participating. I have to make them work. This experience is beneficial because you learn to be able to do many things at the same time.” Holding all groups together and keeping them gainfully occupied, offering explanations and clarifications, listening to discussions, engaging with learners and correcting any misconceptions leads to professional development as evidenced by the teachers’ comments. Academic work by some scholars (Caires & Almeida, 2005) reveals that learning by doing presents occasions for engagement in professional development practices relating to practical knowledge on preparation and organization of the teaching/learning process such as time management, pupil motivation, teaching strategies and, classroom and group organization and monitoring. This, they contend enables teachers to reflect on interrogate their practices, beliefs, and institutional modes of teaching practice. Zimbabwean Teacher 5 raises the idea of being ‘one of them’ through monitoring and engaging in discussions during individual presentations.

During student presentations, I am also a pupil listening, learning, I ask questions and clarify concepts, make additions and subtractions to enhance accuracy of information. This thing is very helpful to me, I learn and other students bring up new information and I have to listen critically, analysing what they say and learning together with them (Zim Teacher 5).

The realization and acknowledgement of the dual teacher roles: teaching to learn and learning to teach all at the same time and, recognition that students have something to contribute also indicates professional development through the process of teaching.

Another dimension of professional development comes through their indirect practice, the direct practice of their learners who imitate and take after them as their teachers. From the CHAT framework, a scenario where learners and the teacher play their roles, within the rules and, as split by the community according to the division of labour, portrays an effective activity system. These constructivist Vygotskian ideas form a core of theses and propositions suggesting that new knowledge emerges out of learners as movement from inter psychic to intra psychic in mediation and support. Professional development experiences in this regard relate to content and pedagogy from handling the learning activity.

As teachers are charged with a professional responsibility to promote students' intellectual, social and emotional growth, planning students' work and activities in the light of their progress and attainment becomes critical. Thus, teachers have to deliberately assess both students' work and their own work. Consequently, developing, maintaining and monitoring learner performance records offered the PUPTs an avenue for professional development as noted by Zim Teacher 1: "I record the marks in pupil's progress book for self-evaluation of my effectiveness and to determine learner understanding. I learn from this process because marks help me to reflect on my work and how I teach." While records of marks may have been essential, some teachers benefited from evaluating their own effectiveness by monitoring student performance through analysis of records of marks. An awareness of the need for self-evaluation of effectiveness of delivery and other processes indicates some professional development. Drawing on the CHAT framework, awareness of the need for self-evaluation represents internalisation which manifests in a capacity to imagine, examine alternatives, perform mental simulations, reflect on practice, improvise etc.

Literature consulted (Caires & Almeida, 2005) further confirms that learner assessment and critical self-reflection provide areas that foster professional development. The ability to reflect indicates professional development.

The trend in giving feedback was to explain the general performance against set criteria. Teachers had this to say:

I learn from this experience of analysing and talking about their performance. This is beneficial and I learn from their comments too (Zim Teacher 5).

I will tell them what was expected and also try to get the real problem, what is it that made them not to perform well and make sure that I rectify those areas? This helps me to think about my work and my methods (SA Teacher 1).

The learners' comments give rise to teacher reflection on their work and their practice which enhances professional development. Teacher teaching success can only be measured through assessment and evaluation of learner performance and achievement and, evaluation strategies and materials (Cohen, Manion et al., 2004). Scholars such as Graven (2004) contend that teacher professionalism requires professional development occasions that transcend knowledge and skills acquisition. Instead they should offer occasions for lesson preparation and delivery, learner assessment and evaluation as well as self-evaluation and critical self-reflection. Consequently, this leads to crafting new knowledge and beliefs about content, pedagogy and learner learning. Assessment of the written work, making running comments indicating where errors or weaknesses occur, compiling mark profiles and rating the performance of students all promote professional development. Crafting meaningful running comments according to Cohen, Manion et al., (2004) is a skill, and such comments add to the knowledge of pupils on a specific topic or concept covered. This process and experience of learner assessment foster professional development. Within the CHAT records of marks and feedback are tools (mediating) that enable the teacher to engage in the teaching practice and, developing comments and providing feedback are supporting processes that enhance effectiveness of subject acting on the object teaching practice to transform it. Thus, there is ongoing evaluation and re-evaluation of the object teaching practice against the desired levels of the outcome.

Teachers also fulfil the 'in loco parentis' role by providing some caring supervision for their learners. Such roles encompass counselling learners for academic, social and disciplinary issues. Interview extracts below represent teachers' sentiments:

...Learners are experiencing a lot of problems they need to be prepared psychologically, emotionally and socially. If they have problems they come to you. They must be able to talk to you, you grow professionally because you get to understand some of the learner problems and you have to help them (SA Teacher 5).

Scholars consulted (Fullan, 1991 ; Lieberman & Mace, 2008) confirm that school communities engage teachers in cross-role activities as counsellors and other learning and professional roles and responsibilities that stimulate and hold together a shared understanding of institutional goals and practices. Authorities studied (Harley, Bertram et al., 1999) discovered that counselling and career guidance were viewed as important by teachers. They further noted that competency/role specialisation boundaries where effectiveness with which teachers assumed laid down roles by policy was shaped by their understanding of those policies. This one-to-one process where students receive help to cope with diverse problems that may impact on their learning juxtaposed with CHAT represents roles and responsibilities as allocated by the community through the division of labour in the activity system. Thus, it was through performing those allocated roles that the teachers experienced some professional development.

This section has provided a synopsis of professional development experiences through the process of doing the teaching within the school site. The next section looks at professional development through school meetings.

Professional Development through School Structures

School structures as sites of professional development in this section are examined under four types of meetings: whole staff, specialization, management and assembly meetings. Membership and/or attendance of School Management Team (SMTs) meetings was by virtue of one being an (HoD) or Deputy Principal as governed by the community rules and division of labour within the activity system.

Whole Staff Meetings

Interaction and information sharing within structural meetings may be achieved through two categories: collegial and hierarchical. The comments provided by the Zimbabwean teachers reflect these two levels of engagement during staff meetings. The collegial category provides a learning mechanism at a horizontal, equal and collegial echelon. The second category is the prescriptive, hierarchical or normative category. While interaction in the hierarchical, prescriptive category may yield positive outcomes and teacher benefits across the board, however, power relations are evident. The 'learnings' and learning mechanisms in these two categories also differ. The following quotation that illustrates learning at the collegial level reflects the trend amongst Zimbabwean participants:

I learn from colleagues through their ideas because they impart different ideas, they have trained at different colleges, so we have a cross-pollination of ideas through staff meetings ...all discussion revolves around teaching. We benefit because in meetings that's where we discuss issues that affect departments or individuals. I gain through that more. I can ask any questions, they will explain (Zim Teacher 4).

Teachers learnt from each other through an interchange and cross-pollination of ideas on an equal rank basis. The different teachers who emerged out of diverse biographies, backgrounds, experiences, disciplines, knowledges and understandings pooled all these into structured meetings, creating an enriched conducive environment for a cross-fertilization of ideas and sharing of pedagogical knowledge. The teachers were together in the collaborative learning and equal sharing through collegial negotiation and renegotiation. CHAT locates individuals in the activity system as co-learners who jointly create and re-create, act and interact, negotiate and re-negotiate appropriate conditions and modify them to satisfy the intended object (Cole, 2004). This therefore locates activity not as an individual endeavour, but a socially mediated activity, a negotiated or relational interdependence.

We come together for staff meetings. Yes, I benefit, because if you have got anything you want to share, this gives opportunities for sharing your views and also learning from others. They provide time for collegial interaction, which is useful because of the sharing, which gives new insights into new ideas from the interaction (Zim Teacher 1).

These comments are representative of the highlights by the Zimbabwean sample group. Collaboration receives emphasis in these comments as essential for personal learning since personal mastery and collaborative mastery feed on each other. The aspect of asking and receiving answers also points to personal strength in inquiry, which goes hand-in-hand with effective collaboration. Collaboration, interdependence, co-learning and personal agency in the activity system are central to CHAT. The success of interdependence is dependent on the effectiveness of personal agency. All this therefore brings to the fore the centrality of teachers' learning individually and with colleagues which Graven (2004) defines as double-loop learning. Borrowing from literature (Friedman, 2005) in Chapter 3, activity systems in double-loop collective learning cultures foster both teacher professional development and improved learner learning through reduction of disciplinary margins. Noteworthy is also the aspect of learning through engagement in collective decision-making as reflected in the following sentiments:

... this time we have so many staff meeting because of this political situation we meet often and decide together what to do so I learn to take part in decision-making. We discuss results, if they are poor, the causes which lead to the poor results and also if they are good we also discuss the reasons. We engage in reflection as a school (Zim Teacher 5).

Learning in this case is constructed and rooted in the human need to feel a sense of belonging, ownership of, and commitment to the decisions and a sense of making a contribution to the activity system. From the literature (Fullan, 1999) such cultures enable teacher learning through provision of opportunities for teachers and school heads to share power and authority through participative decision-making. This aspect, seen within CHAT, with active communication, interaction and collaboration in decision making, planning and implementation which locates actors as co-learners and co-constructors of meaning through negotiation and re-negotiation in the activity system fosters individual and school professional development. Scholars (Little & McLaughlin, 1994) cited in the literature add that shared decision-making defines and strengthens not only the relationship between school management and teachers, but also relationships among the teachers.

Prompted by learner achievement in examinations, teachers reflected on their experiences leading to learning not merely from the experience itself, but, from the experiences, they

contemplated, explored, deliberated, reviewed and interrogated their practices, materials, etc. The group began in a state of perplexity to identify the causes of either low or high learner achievement. Then there was the search for information to unpack and resolve the doubt and settle the perplexity. A whole lot of things were analysed: context, curriculum, pedagogy, resources, learners, etc. Thus through this active engagement in their experiences, examining and analysing issues, using tacit as well as resource-based knowledge, they developed a practical plan of action either to improve or uphold performance. The collaborative feedback, comments, contributions and discussion alluded to were vital for critical reflection and through this whole process, collective learning and development occurs as explained by CHAT.

The double loop learning, engaging in joint decision-making, further confirmed the constructivist view of learning underpinning the CHAT framework. These teachers developed through jointly performing an activity, engaging in a professional staff meeting and the interactions and relationships there shaped their behaviour and identity. This therefore foregrounds professional development for these PUPTs as a socially situated process embedded in joint activities and interactions within and amongst activity systems. While most of the sharing was at collegial echelon, power relations were also evident i.e. some hierarchy in the mechanism of learning. The following description illustrates the existence of the hierarchical mechanism:

The staff meetings are beneficial, they give the way forward as teachers and HoDs. We are given the direction, the terms' expectations, what needs to be done, how the teachers should work. So they are of immense benefits because they clearly illustrate what we should do as professionals ... They remind members to perform, about the ministry policies, departmental policies, requirements in the departments, and that's when we discuss the issues of textbooks, anyone who wants textbooks and guides (Zim Teacher 5).

The comments reflect unequal power relations where some were more knowledgeable than others for diverse reasons may be emanating from wide experiences, workshops or meetings attended, etc. Notwithstanding the mechanism of sharing, teachers benefited from directions, expectations, instructions and reminders on policies. In the school system such hierarchical mechanisms are vital to enhance efficiency and effectiveness as suggested by the teachers (Shumbayaonda & Maringe, 2000). School activity systems form inclusive up-

close opportunities for teacher professional development through understanding what is happening elsewhere in the greater activity system and fostering interdepartmental interdependence and agency (Little & McLaughlin, 1994). Zimbabwean teachers benefited diversely through staff meetings. However, views by SA participants reflected limited professional development from such gatherings. Unlike in the Zimbabwean situation, only one of the two categories of learning emerged: the hierarchical, prescriptive category. Comments by other South African teachers below give a picture of the nature of staff meetings attended:

Yes, yes, we have meetings during break ...So, between 11.30 to 12.00 our principal always wants to have meetings, most are not beneficial because if our principal calls a meeting, it's just not a meeting because he is the one who tells us what to do. In the meeting, he does not want us to say anything. He gets angry and will call you to the office after the meeting. Ja! Just saying teachers do this, do that without asking us, is it ok or not ... (SA Teacher 5).

We do not have meetings, but announcements we get, to say you do this and that at teatime. In other announcements there is not much to benefit because it's like they were telling us recently about how to score the kids and yes it was not different because it's something that we use (SA Teacher 6).

This hierarchical autocratic mechanism emerges as running through the majority of the SA teachers' comments regarding staff meetings. Knowledge acquisition was through prescriptions, instructions and announcements. While this mechanism may imply the master – apprentice situation, some learning is likely to take place through announcements, instructions and prescriptions. Of concern are instances where teachers were denied opportunities to make comments. Day (1995) notes that autocratic tendencies of this nature negate the cultures of collective professional learning instead cultivates cultures of collective compliance. The 'one jacket fits all' prescriptions and instructions bound teachers to practices which were unlikely to match their diverse needs and those of their learners. Thus, rather than developing conducive environments and channels through structured meetings for teacher learning and peer support, to broaden their knowledge of their classroom practices and of their learners, the opportunities were invariably denied.

Interpreted through the CHAT framework, the situation created contradictions between nodes, which shape personal and professional development and commitment. Further from

the CHAT framework, tensions and contradictions erupt in the midst of incompatible goals, values and desired outcomes in the activity system (Davydov, 2004). However, within this framework contradictions in the activity system are not inherently bad, but provide some impetus for learning. From this understanding, subjects devised ways and means of addressing the contradictions and this resulted in change and development. In this situation, teachers were likely to re-establish some balance by testing or revising their actions to accommodate the contradictions and new experiences and in the process professional development occurred. Further, adult learning is usually problem-oriented, occurring when contradictions are significantly related to their lives. When such disequilibrium and contradiction needed addressing, professional development was enabled in the process.

Professional development as it relates to pedagogical, affective and content knowledge was experienced by Zimbabwean teachers, while experiences described by the SA teachers relate to sharing pedagogic knowledge. Specialisation meetings also fostered professional development within the school site as the discussion below illustrates.

Subject Specialization Meetings

Meetings within subject specialization encouraged professional development through discussions that centred on departmental expectations, requirements and policies. Within this node of the activity system, was division of labour where different members held different roles and responsibilities, thus specialization meetings were chaired by the HoD.

The HoD chairs the meetings held at the beginning and end of the term to map the way forward and develop term diary and expectations. We reflect on problems and successes experienced and why, and then map a way forward next term. That helps me to grow professionally and to acquire other general information outside the subject, we have time for informal discussions, which are also very useful (Zim Teacher 1).

Data provided by Zimbabwean Teacher 1 are reflective of the general trend amongst the Zimbabwean participants. From the literature consulted (Southworth & Campbell, 1992) specialization gatherings foster professional development through engagements with colleagues, questioning and observing them, appraisal of own and others' practices overtly

or covertly in relation to content, pedagogy and PCK. Again incidental subject and other dialogues promote acquisition of new knowledge and skills of an active nature as teachers reflect on what they hear, see and practice. Joint reflection involved reviewing a variety of issues and processes. Literature (Southworth & Campbell, 1992) points out that reflection is critical for teacher professional development as it describes the attitude of the mind. For Breen (1999) collegial sharing implies elements critical for teacher learning by not being dictated to, but enabled to engage in interaction, with ample occasions for discussion, critiquing, evaluating and disagreeing and, being treated and treating each other like professionals. Breen further notes that such an approach views learning as a lifelong process in which teachers themselves direct and which an ongoing part of their professionalism is built on. Such collective learning as colleagues at an equal echelon through engagement in activity is the core of CHAT framework.

Academic Board/Management Meetings

Four Zimbabwean teachers were HoDs and therefore belonged to the school academic board by virtue of that position of responsibility within the community rules and division of labour. The frequency with which these meetings were held varied from one school to another, ranging from every two weeks to every six weeks. The teachers found these meetings beneficial for information sharing on issues to do with professionalism, departmental management and teamwork. The sharing described was the horizontal equal sharing where they were all together in the sharing. The following quotation represents the aspect of information sharing amongst the Zimbabwean sample group:

I learn what it means to be a professional. We discuss the duties that every teacher is supposed to do. We share information on how best we can approach certain aspects, so this is beneficial. From these HoDs meetings I grow, I learn a lot they assist me how to manage the members and the dept and to ensure everybody remains professional and committed. (Zim Teacher 1).

There is concurrence that these teachers gained from HoDs meetings. From the CHAT framework, HoDs illustrate splitting of the roles and responsibilities according to rules (norms and practices) and the division of labour in the activity system. As managers, they had to establish the desired result, utilize all tools and artifacts available, assume authority,

obtain, organize, guide and direct those tools and artifacts within the rules and division of labour toward the desired result in this node of the activity system. Further, within this node, at collegial level of interaction and sharing, teachers also discussed other issues that affected them not only as teachers, but as social beings. However, worth mentioning is that within this node of the activity system, there were some elements of power dynamics and hierarchical sharing through which the teachers also benefited.

Again informed by the CHAT, in the leadership roles, HoDs brought all actions of the different members of the activity system together for a common purpose and subordinated individual needs to activity system needs. Through mutual understanding, with mediational tools and artifacts (appropriate dialogue and communication), the activity system working within the rules and division of labour would operate much like a well oiled machine to achieve the object teaching practice and its consequent transformation into an outcome - improved practice. The issue of appropriate handling of contradictions within the departmental activity systems was also fore-grounded. Such contradictions, however, prompted acquisition of new strategies, learnings and experiences as alluded to earlier on. That four of the six Zimbabwean participants were already HoDs in 2008 after enrolling in the programme in 2006/2007 may confirm findings of a survey by Progressive Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ) (2007), which notes that 5 000 qualified teachers left their jobs through resignations and migrations to neighbouring countries in 2006. On the South African side, the one participant who was already in management as a Deputy Principal indicates benefits through this responsibility as follows:

In this photo, I am with the principal analysing learner progress in the 2nd term. I have gained a lot from the principal. From management and administration I have benefited. In the management side I am gaining. ... I was not that good in that area, that's why I gained a lot. I am now able to manage the staff even in his absence and to manage my own class and to address some of the small issues to do with learner achievement, the analysis you know. (SA Teacher 1).

The confession of some lack of knowledge in management and administration creates receptiveness to learning and development. Worth noting is professional development through collective engagements in activity at diverse levels; with the principal; with management and administrative processes and procedures; with colleagues and with his

own class. The fact that this teacher was already a confirmed Deputy Principal of this high school (Researcher diary notes 22.07.008) was contrary to the Zimbabwean situation where one cannot be considered even at a local level for a position of HoD without a professional qualification. From the highlights, four of the Zimbabwean teachers who were already HoDs and one South African teacher as Deputy Principal experienced professional development through this extended internal structural facility. Hence, in terms of school meetings, five South African teachers and two Zimbabwean teachers out of posts of responsibility attended a reduced number of school meetings through which learning was likely to occur. Of great concern are the contradictions thrown up by a situation with a total absence of unfruitful internal structural gatherings as portrayed by five South African teachers and one Zimbabwean teacher. The contradictions are discussed in a later section.

What is emerging from the data on academic board meetings indicates that teachers benefited from knowledge related to pedagogical and management skills, departmental relations and communication as well as in relation to management and administration. Professional development was further experienced through assembly, which is discussed in the following section.

Staff and Students Meetings (Assemblies)

As a full activity system, two or three times a week, staff and students met during assembly to set into motion the day or the week. Three benefits emerge from assembly to do with social cohesion, development of management skills and receiving information.

With regard to social cohesion, information sharing although it was led by one person, it was gained collectively in the activity system, thus fostering a ‘family spirit’ and social cohesion. Further, just the idea of coming together as a community fostered social cohesion. The level of information sharing implied in these comments was generally non-hierarchical, at the equal echelon where the sharing is horizontal. The quotations below show the general picture emerging from all the Zimbabwean participants: “We learn to be a family and we get new information about the school and student learning ... encourages assembly and socialization and we receive guidance from either teachers or head or deputy on rules, policies and anything new” (Zim Teacher 2). Explaining this process through the

CHAT, first, an aspect of professional development that occurred was through induction of the PUPTs into the school rituals and symbolic activities as well as learning to be a member of the activity system. Assembly was a moral code of the school activity system practices, which the teacher needed to be inducted into. Further, the theme of the week provided some concept to structure the week, areas that defined broadly the objects of that week within the activity system. Day (1995) notes that in setting the scene and providing appropriate conditions for professional development, the school principal shapes the school culture, building structures where both teachers and learners learn and develop. This participation therefore promoted professional development. There is further evidence that more professional development occurred when they were on duty as explained below:

...I learnt more when I was on duty. The teacher on duty takes charge as master of ceremony, leading proceedings and controlling students. So we learn a lot to control both colleagues and students (Zim Teacher 3).

Assembly begins at 7.30 and then at 8.00 we start 1st period. There is a verse read, short prayer and any information to give students, that's it... You get to know how to manage a large group of learners, the whole school, you have to learn to do it, now I am enjoying it, I was afraid at first ... (SA Teacher 4).

Active engagement in collective activity illustrates performance as stipulated by the community through horizontal and vertical distribution of roles and responsibilities in the division of labour in the activity system. Taking charge of the assembly function as the master of ceremony, leading all proceedings and controlling students was a role allocated within the activity system. These activities therefore led to professional development and development of their confidence. The picture presented regarding assembly indicates that teachers generally experienced professional development related to social cohesion and pedagogy to do with management and control and from announcements relating to policies.

Within the planned and structured activities discussed above, informal/incidental professional development occurred as a by-product of the planned activities as reflected in the representative comments below:

We discuss generally on social, economic, educational issues, share ideas freely without interference from the admin. We can relax, giving each other feedback on whatever from their classrooms, their experience and you learn from these (Zim Teacher 4).

At break times we chat just generally and I find that very beneficial too, you always learn from listening and talking to people. You benefit, merely listening to interpersonal social discussions. The staffroom is also a place for relaxation, social and professional interpersonal interactions and conversations. We develop from different ideas of different colleagues (Zim Teacher 3).

The staffroom emerged as a place where teachers converged for whole staff formal gatherings as well as for relaxation, non-formal and, informal interpersonal discussions. What is also coming through is that professional development was therefore experienced informally. Borrowing on literature surveyed (Southworth & Campbell, 1992) in-service student teachers they studied hailed professional development as having occurred when they had incidental chances to see or hear about, and reflect upon colleagues' practice. Such informal/incidental interactions offer knowledge transcending the teacher's own classroom walls. These occasions arise naturally through other collective formal teacher engagements. The informal sharing was confirmed by SA teachers as highlighted below:

Our discussions are constructive. Informal professional development yes, takes place, we talk about ways to make our schools better, so not just our school but all schools and black schools in particular. Ja, they are helping me to grow, you gain when you are talking and when you listen to the way they discuss their work and you say oh that's how it's done (SA Teacher 1).

There is evidence of informal professional development and interactions were based on issues of school improvement and pedagogy. Thus, incidental engagement with issues, with tools and artifacts, with other specialists, within and outside formal networks, offer opportunities for professional development and support. This view conceives an amalgam of formal, non-formal, experiential and incidental opportunities as providing adequate occasions for professional learning and development. The view further acknowledges limitations related to mediational tools and artifacts within the different activity systems and contexts. The informal dialogues related to learner discipline also provided professional development experiences as highlighted by SA Teacher 5:

Yaah, I learn from these interactions, the way they take a parental role, I am young when some of the students misbehave I will tell them and they will show me how to handle them and the misunderstanding with colleagues I just tell them, they will advise me.

There is evidence of informal professional development emanating from the pastoral responsibility assumed by older teachers with regard to the inherent classroom practice challenges and collegial conflicts within the activity system. Given the collective nature of the object of activity in the activity system within CHAT, Engestrom (2001) confirms the existence of tensions and contradictions which manifest, for instance, in lack of support for, or disagreements with pedagogies or other such situations. However, as alluded to earlier, such contradictions give rise to a capacity for learning and development by interpreting and approaching contradictions, contesting interpretations, reading the environment and drawing on the others' resources to address those contradictions. The more experienced teachers in this community assumed a parental role within the activity system and as it emerges, not only over the learners under their care, but also on colleagues. Data analysis presented in this section shows the school as a site for both planned formal, non-formal and unplanned informal/incidental professional development.

Drawing on CHAT, professional development through experience provides mediating tools and artifacts for shaping the object given that learning through practice is meant to enhance the practice. Thus knowledge and skills gained through supervision, lesson preparation and delivery, pastoral roles inclusive of other psychological and materials tools, and resources will impact on the object teaching practice. Further, the structures represent the community, which according to the division of labour is responsible for providing the tools and artifacts. Through a variety of meetings the school provides tools and artifacts. Learners, parents, school management, Responsible authority and DoE, as well as specialisation colleagues, all other school colleagues and SMT all constitute the community. Rules represent the school rules, regulations and practices as well as ministry rules and policies. The division of labour represents those roles and responsibilities allocated and acted on by the community according to their posts as principal, deputy principal, HoD and teacher. Location of these components is illustrated in Figure 4.

The descriptions of professional development experiences through classroom practice and structures provided by the teachers present an ideal functional situation where all the different nodes in the activity system act according to rules and division of labour to shape

the object into an outcome. But given the collective nature of the activity, internal tensions and contradictions emerge and these are discussed in the following section.

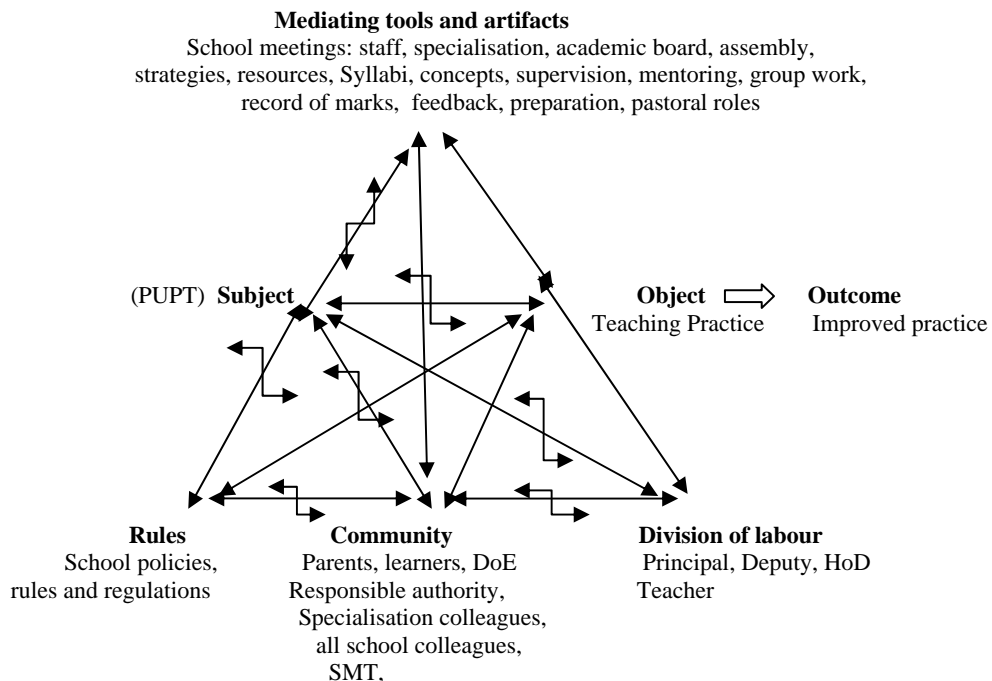
Contradictions

Contradictions covered in this section relate to supervision, lesson preparation and delivery, pastoral roles and school meetings. In Figure 4, the elbow, double arrow connectors indicate the area of contradictions; between subject and tools, subject and community, subject and division of labour, subject and rules, rules, community and division of labour and community and tools. These are discussed in turn in the next section.

Contradictions Related to Supervision

With regard to document supervision, while all of the Zimbabwean teachers indicated document supervision by the HoD and head/deputy, one teacher raised contrary views about her activity system. Similar sentiments were also raised by five of the SA teachers. The absence of document supervision therefore implies absence of related guidance in this activity system. Faith and trust in the professionalism of teachers was based on provision of mediating tools and artifacts. The interview extracts below capture the sentiments:

Figure 4: Professional development in the school



No, somewhere somehow in our system something is wrong. Everyone is doing what they feel is enough for pupils. We do not have any such discussions in the school. We are supposed to have supervision by the HoD, D/Head or senior teacher, but nobody does, they believe and trust that we scheme because they gave us scheme books... The Ministry expects supervision ... (laughs) (Zim Teacher 2).

Yes, they are on paper but not like it actually does happen, no, no-o-o, there really isn't much for anybody to see even if they wanted to supervise them because in our school we have only the school work schedule developed by a team and no lesson plans, nothing. So everyone does his or her work and there is nothing like supervision of anything. (SA Teacher 1).

The school management expected teachers to act on the object informed by a neighbouring node of the activity system (DoE or national association, etc.). What also comes through is that, not only did school management neglect the division of labour in the central school activity system, but also in the neighbouring (ministry) activity system. First subject/community contradiction plays up due to the community's failure to enact the roles and responsibilities (supervision) to enable the subject to act on the object, teaching practice, efficiently. Second, community/division of labour/rule contradiction emerges due to a mismatch between policy and practice. Policy requires in-school supervision structures but on the contrary, school community fails to provide that supportive guidance. The flow of these contradictions is illustrated with the elbow double arrow connectors in Figure 4.

Given the absence of document supervision, an absence of lesson supervision in the same contexts as well as supervision by DoE/Ministry of Education in all the school settings in the two systems was noted. Related contradictions similar to those discussed in document supervision emerge and are therefore not going to be discussed to avoid repetition.

Absence of mentoring support in four of the six SA contexts created contradictions. The teachers' sentiments are represented below:

No, no one at all assists me. On paper, Ja, I have a mentor, but in reality I do not. No, there is no support, not really. So I am trying to develop the way I think is correct even if I may want to consult, nobody is there (SA Teacher 2).

I don't have a mentor but an HoD who does not even know what happens in my classroom. The other teacher is always absent and he does not go to class even when he is there. They don't come to your class even when you tell them you have problems (SA Teacher 6).

There is evidence of total absence of mentoring support structures although such support was documented. Absence mentoring implied deprivation of the many dimensions of professional development, and the whole repertoire of in-school supervision, guidance and support within the activity system. Another apprehension was that without proper in-school support structures the teacher developed in the manner that gave them comfort. The teachers highlighted some negligence on the part of the SMT to enact their division of labour, thereby failing to provide the requisite tools and artifacts even when they were desperately needed. Another aspect raised was the failure by other community members to perform the basics of professionalism manifesting in absenteeism and the failure to attend to one's classes even when present. While this aspect was outside the focus of my study, it raised some concern. Contradictions therefore played up due to absence of in-school mentorship for the provision of support and guidance understood as tools and artifacts.

Thus, subject/community contradictions emerge due to the failure of the community to provide tools and artifacts and this in turn spawns community/division of labour contradictions as the community fails to act out their roles and responsibilities, thus depriving the subject of the much needed guidance and support. Further, the absence of mentoring support implies limited tools, thus limited knowledge and skills to apply other available tools and artifacts to act on the object and transform it. This lack of the ideal creates subject/object contradiction, which can be understood from Figure 4. The DoE (2006) notes that the success of on-site initial teacher education rests with the quality of supervision and quality of in-school mentoring provided. They, however, hasten to point out that there is generally a tradition of lack of supervision and mentoring.

Notwithstanding this, one positive aspect emerging out of the teachers' comments is their acknowledgement of the need for mentoring support. Graven (2004) describes this awareness of one's own limitations as enhancing professional development. The next section focuses on contradictions relating lesson preparation and delivery.

Contradictions Related to Lesson Preparation and Delivery

Tension plays up emanating from the teachers' lack of knowledge and skill for interpretation and implementation of mediational tools and artifacts. While SA teachers are

required to implement the NCS, they lacked skills to interpret and implement this policy. This is illustrated below:

... Our framework, it is our syllabus which we have to cover and also when you look at this NCS, it says as you have to spend more time with the learners, you have to make sure that they are able to do A B C before D and also now, how to do that effectively is also a problem when you have to cover this before the end of the year it means I need to be developed on all these things, how do I adapt myself on this ... (SA Teacher 1).

Thus the limited general pedagogic knowledge as well as the ‘what’, ‘why’ and ‘how’ of the object creates multiple contradictions. The teacher was therefore likely to use tools that provided confidence thereby presenting a mismatch between policy and practice. Related to this was some fear of failure to meet syllabus requirements. Thus, while policy makers expected implementation of NCS, this was apparently not happening in all classrooms.

First, subject/tool contradiction plays up from lack of knowledge related to interpretation and implementation of NCS. Further, due to limited knowledge and skill to utilize tools, enacting the object may not be effective to transform it to an outcome, thus spawning subject/object contradiction. These limitations imply limited implementation of policy thereby creating subject/community contradiction. Given that the subject is obliged to act on the object appropriately according to the division of labour, and is unable due to pedagogic limitations, subject/division of labour contradiction also plays up. In this situation, the teacher adopts what they are comfortable with, thus creating subject/rule contradiction. The flow of contradictions is illustrated by the elbow double arrow connectors in Figure 4.

While alignment with new pedagogy policies of interactive teaching in lesson delivery is a desired goal, the comments by SA teachers below indicate contrary views:

It's madness to think of group work or any collaborative work in a small room packed with 80 learners. There is just no space for anybody to move even learners when they are in. It's difficult to control learners, so I lecture (SA Teacher 2).

The good students, I get them impossible extremely difficult sums to work out just to get them waked up and settle them down, ja! Something ahead of them, then they battle and battle Yaah ... I don't want to give them attention no-o-oh, it just does not seem right, with 80 learners I say why should I spent a special amount of time on particular learners when the rest are getting 20%? Those are the people I need most of my time, that's my approach (SA Teacher 2).

There are a number of issues that may hinder effective achievement of the object and its transformation in learning environments described above related to infrastructure and classroom management and control. The subject thus fails to enact the new tools, i.e. collaborative strategies, and to handle learner diversity. SA teachers generally concurred that the above average learners needed no assistance as they already were in the appropriate spaces. The above scenarios create contradictions.

Subject /tool contradiction thus emerges due to failure to adopt learner-centred strategies. Further, the subject's failure to use tools and enact rules set by the community (Ministry) in the activity system gives rise to subject/rule/community contradiction. On the SA side, subject/tool contradiction and subject/rule/community contradiction also play up due to limited skill in class management generally and diversity handling in particular. Policy imperatives emphasize inclusive education, where learners of diverse capabilities and backgrounds collaboratively learn by receiving adequate scaffolding to enhance continuous learning and progressing at their diverse paces. The subject's actions, in this case, giving impossible sums, negates the imperatives thereby creating contradictions. One aspect of the teacher's role is to act 'in loco parentis', in the process, however, tensions emerge.

Contradictions Related to Pastoral Roles

The majority (five of the six) of the SA and all the Zimbabwean teachers indicated that they perform pastoral roles within their activity systems. However, one SA Teacher made contrary comments: "Situations do arise but I abdicate such responsibilities to other teachers, yaah, I am not sure I am up to some heavy stuff that learners come across, so I usually get some other teachers to handle that" (SA Teacher 2). There is evident failure to act on the division of labour in this activity system, thus negating policy requirements of the 'in loco parentis' role. The Norms and Standards for Educators require teachers to perform the citizenship, community and pastoral role by developing the emotional, social and ethical well-being of the learners through supporting and caring for them. Failure to perform the roles and responsibility means negating the rules of the activity system stipulated by the division of labour, therefore creating subject/rule/community and division of labour contradiction. The elbow, double arrow connectors in Figure 4 represents the flow of contradictions.

Contradictions Related to School Meetings

While almost all Zimbabwean teachers indicated professional development experiences through staff meetings, contrarily one teacher painted a gloomy picture regarding meetings and the situation in her school: “No, not at all, we have never had any... We are left on our own... Something somewhere is wrong at this school ...” (Zim Teacher 2). Lack of meetings was also confirmed by four SA teachers as represented in these comments: “No meetings, No, no meetings at all. We have no staff gatherings in this school nothing ... (SA Teacher 2). Given that no other evidence emerged to confirm these scenarios consequently making the comments appear insignificant, this still remains a cause for concern that raises contradictions. The teachers were denied engagement in collective/collaborative learning as no opportunities for learning from and with others existed. This created four levels of contradictions.

First subject/community contradiction emerges due to absence of staff meetings in a situation where meetings should enhance learning, reflection and interaction among staff. Second, a community/division of labour contradiction also arises because the community fails to play their role and consequently fails to provide the mediational tools and artifacts (meetings) as resources for the subject. The third level, community/rule contradictions also come up. The community, in neglecting their role of mounting school meetings, overlooks policy demands. Again, given that the teacher lacks some of the mediational tools creates subject/object contradiction as enacting the object may be of lower quality. The flow of contradictions is illustrated in Figure 4 by elbow double arrow connectors.

Other contradictions are also spawned by a school’s failure to mount workshops for teachers, leaving teachers to benefit from workshops organized and mounted through external structures as reflected in these comments; “Eh-h, at this school we don’t have workshops... no, no workshops (Zim Teacher 1). “The only workshops that we get are from the department for all teachers in the circuit” (SA Teacher 2). Again, in this situation, community/division of labour contradictions plays up due to the community failure to

deliver according to the roles and responsibilities. Like in the absence of meetings above, four layers of contradictions emerge which can also be understood through Figure 4.

Another dimension of contradictions also emerges when teachers are denied an opportunity to question or comment during staff meetings. Thus, rather than developing conducive environments and channels through internal structured meetings for teacher learning and collegial support to broaden teachers' professional development, the opportunities are invariably denied. The principal, whose role, according to the division of labour, is to call and conduct beneficial meetings, instead gives announcements, prescriptions and instructions. This denies a situation where meetings should enhance learning, reflection and interaction among staff. Such a situation as illustrated by elbow double arrow connectors in Figure 4 creates multiple contradictions at four levels.

Conclusion

The discussion indicates that teachers learn through diverse experiential processes. Overall, Zimbabwean teachers experienced professional development to do with content, pedagogy and PCK and these experiential processes fostered personal and interpersonal agency and interdependence through use of tools and artifacts. Specifically, their professional development experiences emerged from supervision and guidance, lesson delivery and performance of pastoral roles. SA teachers on the overall had limited experiences with regard to preparation for lessons, supervision and handling diversity in the classroom.

Lesson delivery enabled their professional development experiences in relation to content, pedagogic knowledge and PCK through utilization of mediational tools such as group work and assessment. Assessment enabled professional development through reflection. Structurally in the school site, Zimbabwean teachers were exposed to professional development experiences on diverse aspects related to pedagogical, affective, and content knowledge and skills through whole staff and specialisation meetings. Their SA counterparts had limited and professional development experiences from school meetings. Through the academic board debates teachers in the two countries experienced pedagogical and managerial professional development. Assembly was valuable in the Zimbabwean

context for enabling professional development related to social cohesion and management as well as issues of policy, rules and regulations. In the SA context assembly mainly provided a forum for sharing of religious and other information taking the form of announcements.

These teachers also experienced professional development through wider professional sites external to the school. Professional development experiences in those sites are discussed in the next section.

Professional Development through Wider Professional Sites

In the context of this study, wider professional sites refer to subject specialisation clusters, subjects associations, DoE and teacher unions. Both SA and Zimbabwean teachers indicated that they attended workshops organized through these sites. This section discusses the sites in turn.

Subject Specialization Cluster Meetings

The specialization colleagues in the cluster collaborate, share, learn from and support each other in planning, teaching and learner assessment to shape the shared object. The cluster therefore forms a community, which, through the division of labour, provides tools and artifacts. Hence all benefits from the cluster provided psychological and material tools and artifacts for the PUPT. Participants' comments as represented below:

We exchange marking schemes, textbooks, and information and also we do seminars. All schools write questions and exchange those questions and pupils research and make presentations. This is very helpful, you learn from others in the specialization. We meet as geography teachers and share information on teaching certain concepts and we set common papers together for the mid-year and end of year internal examinations (Zim Teacher 6).

The relationship is good. When you need material from that school you can ask, they give you. We have cluster meetings. Yes, I benefit, especially me, other teachers will tell you how you deal with class discipline, how to manage your students. We also have common exams for our classes, we set the paper together in the meetings (SA Teacher 3).

Interaction within subject specialization cluster revolved around exchange and sharing mediating tools and artifacts. One way of enhancing their classroom practice was through sharing psychological and material tools and through this process professional

development occurred. This confirms observations by some scholars consulted (Prawat, 1992; Chikoko, 2006) who note that clusters as groups of schools within close geographical proximity of each other, share ideas, resources, pedagogies and challenges all intended to improve education quality and relevance in their respective institutions. Pedagogical and content knowledge was therefore shared and gained. All these activities led to professional development. Borrowing from authorities consulted (Lieberman & McLaughlin, 1992) school-to-school interdependence and agency enable teachers to transcend their own school and classroom contexts, to meet other possibilities and colleagues confronted with and solving similar challenges. Within CHAT framework, this school-to-school interdependence and sharing of both material and psychological tools and artifacts related to assessment and various forms of teaching, class management and learner discipline enable learning and development to occur through joint engagement in activity. Through this joint work, they reflected on their own practice and consequently learnt from both own reflection and others' practices and experiences. This section has illustrated professional development experiences through interactions in the specialization cluster related to content, pedagogic and PCK. The next section discusses professional development through the departments of education.

Department/Ministry of Education Workshops (DoE/MoE)

The ministry workshops for the Zimbabwean teachers had become sporadic, notwithstanding this, teachers highlighted that the workshops and meetings were always beneficial each time they are mounted. The following extract reflects the trend among Zimbabwean participants:

Yes, we benefit, we learn a lot actually from these gatherings. The issues discussed are important, how to set external examinations, they give you updates in terms of syllabus requirements, the nature of the syllabus, how to attack some sections that students might be finding difficult... So they are important, ja! ... (Zim Teacher 1).

This time they use the head to attend to most of them and then he comes to train teachers usually after classes. Yes, we still benefit, in our case our head will not miss anything, we really learn all what he will have learnt himself, he will even give you notes, like the one we had on assessment ... (Zim Teacher 3).

Ministry meetings were developmental as teachers gained pedagogical knowledge to do with assessment and received the latest information on the syllabus and how to set examinations. However, the Ministry had instead resorted to a cascading mechanism of teacher staff development. The aspect of training at its generic meaning implies coaching, instructing, lecturing, teaching, hence implies hierarchical sharing. There is evidence that teachers benefited as ‘the head captures all’ the information and sometimes distributed handouts as a mechanism of sharing pedagogic knowledge related to assessment.

Contrarily however, Wedekind and Harley (2004) noted inadequate training received by teachers through the cascading approach to teacher staff development. Such a situation creates contradictions as the community is failing to effectively act according to the roles and responsibilities within the division of labour in the activity system.

Further, although the Zimbabwean teachers above shared a high opinion of the value of ministry lead workshops, their SA counterparts raised contrary views regarding DoE workshops, which they viewed as a waste of time. Their experiences with DoE confirm findings from a study by Graven (2004) which revealed criticisms levelled against SA DoE organized workshops for not being of benefit to teachers. SA teachers, however, indicated benefits from workshops organized by other facilitators in conjunction with DoE. SA Teacher 2 commented:

We had one staff development meeting in April last year, funded by DoE. I was one of the organizers, what the workshoppers said sounded quite useful in terms of teaching and learner discipline but the problem is that when we got to my school it was never implemented, but the workshoppers themselves seemed to know what they were doing (SA Teacher 2).

Teachers benefited from discussions and shared pedagogic knowledge related to teaching and class discipline. The comments were an admission that there was something to learn during these workshops, suggesting some professional development. Four issues probably contributed to the workshops, earning this high regard. First, resource persons were knowledgeable of that which they had to share. Second, SA Teacher 2 as one of the organizers probably contributed to the selection of relevant workshop content. Third, given that he (SA Teacher 2) had been one of the organizers, they probably shared at an equal collegial level. Fourth, the workshop content touched on aspects of learner discipline that the teachers were grappling with as indicated: “ Ja, but mina (myself) in this issue of

discipline I don't think they (DoE) have helped me because I think I have asked last year like how do you discipline a child like if they are many in the class like they are many in my classes ...” (SA Teacher 3). The aspects confirm findings from wider literature (see for example Field 1994) that relevant and effective professional development comes with ownership and control of processes and workshop agendas by participants. The absence of implementation of resolutions at school level created contradictions as discussed later, again showing failure to carry out roles and responsibilities as dictated by the division of labour in the activity system. The SA workshops were frequent and direct with teachers as opposed to the Zimbabwean situation where workshops were infrequent and cascaded. However, teacher professional associations also provided sites for teacher professional development, and they are the focus of discussion in the next section.

Teacher Professional Associations

As members of specializations or professional associations, teachers benefited from such meetings. Comments made by teachers below reflect gains made from professional association meetings:

Our geography association is very beneficial, we discuss critical issues about teaching and assessment. So we benefit a lot and students also benefit. We are given reports on candidates performance in the immediate previous examinations, this helps to prepare current students for the coming one, this helps us as teachers to think of our teaching methods ... (Zim Teacher 1).

We have an association of physical science teachers called ...Physical Science Association here we were in SASOL for a workshop we do a lot of useful things that professionally develop us as teachers related to our teaching and our specialization ... (SA Teacher 1).

Workshop content was described as ‘critical’ and ‘beneficial’ and at the same time fostered reflection and re-examination of their strategies. As lesson delivery and assessment is pivotal, any debate revolving around PCK was likely to be well received. Assessment had a direct bearing on learner preparation “...I pick question papers, get these questions to the pupils so that when we discuss in the lesson about that particular aspect they would have questions in mind” (Zim Teacher 5). Given the examination approach to teaching adopted by Zimbabwean teachers, any workshops that dwelt on assessment and examinations were likely to be viewed in high regard as this assisted teachers to prepare students for

subsequent external examinations. Because only four Zimbabwean teachers confirmed the existence of a professional association, one is therefore inclined to believe that other specialization associations were either inactive or non-existent. Contrarily, all SA teachers indicated benefits through such subject specialization association gatherings at an equal level. Through this whole process, they developed professionally.

Some scholars (see for example Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995) point out that teacher professional development emerges from membership in professional associations and communities that transcend institutional and geographical boundaries. Such communities converge teachers from diverse backgrounds, experiences and knowledge who have something in common; their subject specialization. In the context of CHAT, the professional association represents a community as these people share the object: teaching practice of their specialization. Thus through this activity system, knowledge is expanded and shared and this process expands the PUPT's professional, personal and social capacities. Drawing on Graven (2004) constituted specialisation professional associations meetings and conferences that facilitate teacher collaborative work on their curriculum, listening and engaging in teachers' work are effective in teacher professional development. These networks are therefore a vital way of upholding teacher professional development and engagement within subject specializations in wider contexts.

On the over all, in the teacher association meetings, both SA and Zimbabwean teachers experienced disciplinary and pedagogical professional development.

Within these non-formal planned meetings, informal/incidental professional development also occurred. The comments below represent the trend with the Zimbabwean teachers. "I socialize with professionals in my association. Sometimes just talking to people not only in my cluster, but other clusters, you learn. Ja! we share experiences and discuss some possible solutions" (Zim Teacher 4). Interactions covered a broad spectrum in particular those issues that touched their lives as individuals and as teachers socially and economically, inclusive of the AIDS pandemic. Sharing also encompassed challenges to do with their profession and their schools and possible solutions and in the process they learnt from those experiences and practices of colleagues. How similar challenges were

addressed in one school provided learning for similar contexts. Thus, debates apart from enhancing professional development experiences, related to pedagogy, fostered acquisition of knowledge and information related to social and economic challenges.

Teacher Union Meetings

Teachers in the two countries belonged to teacher unions. Zimbabwean teachers belonged to two unions, Zimbabwe Teachers' Association (ZIMTA) and the Progressive Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ). The SA teachers belonged to the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) "...yaah, we belong to that association." (SA Teacher 2). These teacher unions are expected to develop and improve the status of the teaching profession and promote teacher development and professionalism and to serve as teachers' trade union, acting as a mouthpiece for the teachers' welfare, rights and responsibilities, and socio-economic and professional needs. The comments below indicate teachers' views;

We belong to ZIMTA and PTUZ. We used to meet, but this year it has not been possible. These were very useful and we learnt quite a lot because they covered teachers' welfare, salaries, conditions of service, approach to work and professionalism, handling cases and the need to be fully registered and be paid up for full protection (Zim Teacher 5).

We have SADTU meetings, we all belonged to that association. Some of these meetings are for professional development pertaining to specific disciplines and some are just general, to develop a teacher. Ja! Sometimes they are beneficial ja! sometimes complete waste of time, but most of them are beneficial. These are held about once a term (SA Teacher 2).

Meetings of this nature gain high regard as they touch on the lives of teachers not only as professionals but also as individuals given that issues of salaries and conditions of service are always thorny and crowd-pulling. The meetings had, however, become sporadic in Zimbabwe. The SA teachers' description of their professional development experiences in this section indicates that the information shared covered both pedagogy and content, in addition to the affective issues of teachers' salaries and conditions of employment.

Drawing on the American Association of Educators (2009) teacher unions advance the profession through teacher professional development, advocacy and protection and, teacher recognition and rewards. Zimbabwean teacher unions seek to provide for and protect professional and other teachers needs through workshops and meetings and other forms of

information publication (Zimbabwe, 2006). The SADTU on the other hand defines their overarching goal as to fight for better remuneration and employment conditions for educators, promote their professional ambitions and assume a leading position in educational transformation through workshops (SA Democratic Teachers' Union, 2009).

The wider professional sites discussed in this section when viewed within CHAT constitute various dimensions of the community which should provides diverse forms of tools and artifacts depending on their nature as a community. Thus in this particular activity system, the community dimensions comprise of the subject specialisation cluster, DoE, subject association and teacher unions. Rules in this context imply policies, rules and constitutions, and, the division of labour encompasses the different roles and responsibilities expected of different institutions such as specialisation cluster, subject association, DoE or the teacher union. However, from the negotiations and renegotiations in the activity system, contradictions are bound to occur and this is the focus of the following section. Contradictions that emerge between the different nodes of the activity system are illustrated by the elbow double arrow connectors.

Contradictions

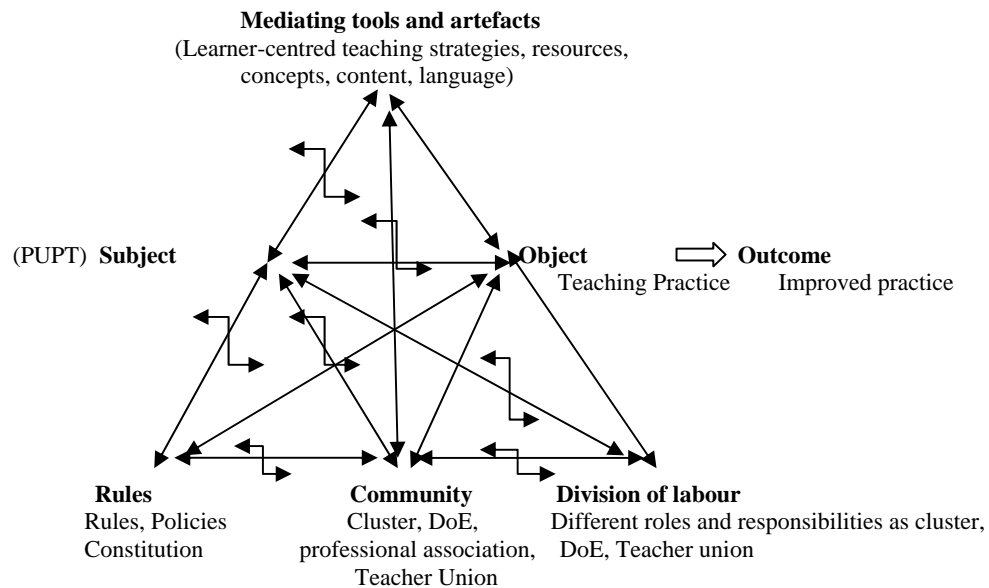
Contradictory comments from discussions on professional development experiences through wider professional sites are related to unfruitful workshops by DoE.

Contradictions Related to DoE Meetings/Workshops

Contradictions play up within workshops run through external structures. South African teachers indicated that workshops run by the DoE are not beneficial. The comments given by a SA teacher illustrate this: “From DoE these are absolutely not beneficial. I don’t know, maybe I have an attitude problem, because I find that I know more mathematics than my helpers. I don’t think they come well prepared anywhere. I go there because it’s a DoE requirement, but I doubt that I ever learn anything” (SA Teacher 2).

The teacher raises a number of issues in the comment: that workshops were not beneficial, that he probably had an attitude problem, that he knows more mathematics than the

Figure 5: Professional development through wider professional sites



facilitators, that facilitators came unprepared for the meetings, and that he only attended because this was required by DoE. There are different ways of looking at these comments: first; given that the teacher believed he knows more mathematics than facilitators may have lead him into developing an attitude towards these workshops. Against this background the teacher would not have attended given an option. Second, facilitators’ lack of knowledge and unpreparedness may have lead to the development of this attitude where all the workshops were now seen as a waste of time and unbeneficial. As attitudes affect behaviours, the teacher would not have attended if this were not a requirement of the DoE. This scenario created some contradictions.

Observations by SA Teacher 2 were confirmed by SA Teacher 5 who raised the following sentiments: “Yaah, for NCS at the beginning of this year every educator had to go and attend a workshop for a week, DoE arranged. They just waste our time, the workshops are not helpful. Inspectors don’t know anything. For me they were not useful. I benefited nothing” (SA Teacher 5). The views raised above make it clear that participating teachers approached workshops as recipients of information, ‘we don’t know’, ‘you ask’ and, not as equal partners in the sharing, thereby suggesting hierarchical mechanism. Although these views do not receive any further support, this does not imply in any way overshadowing the serious contradictions within this node of the activity system. The scenario presents

several layers of contradictions which impact on the achievement of the object as explained below.

First; subject/community contradiction plays up due to DoE failure to effectively staff develop the subject. Second, community/division of labour contradiction plays up, the community has failed to perform their role according to the division of labour. Third, community/rule contradiction comes up due to failure to effectively enact NCS as required by policy. Consequently this impacts on the manner in which the subject acts on the object and creating subject/object contradiction. According to the division of labour in this activity system, it is mandatory that DoE who represent the community be familiar with the NCS documents and content. Hence, the community cannot engage with the tools and artifacts in these workshops and consequently the object is not fully achieved. Further, contradiction, subject/tool (NCS documents) play up due to the teacher's inability to utilize the tools and artifacts (NCS). In this context, the teacher cannot understand the documents to enable their effective interpretation. Another contradiction plays up due to lack of implementation of resolutions at school level, subsequent to fruitful workshops run by DOE in conjunction with other organisations and this creates a subject/community/division of labour contradiction. School management through the division of labour is expected to implement or facilitate implementation of resolutions in the activity system. Thus subject/tool/object contradiction therefore plays up emanating from the lack of implementation of resolutions by the community. The flow of contradictions can be traced along the elbow double arrow connectors in Figure 5.

Teachers experienced professional development of content and pedagogy in the DoE/MoE related workshops. The SA teachers further experienced professional development related to class management and learner discipline. For the two groups of teachers, dialogue in teacher professional associations enabled interaction on disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge and the teacher unions enabled professional development experiences related to pedagogy, professionalism and issues of salaries and teacher conditions of employment. The next section discusses professional development experiences through informal interactions.

Professional Development Through Informal Interactions.

This section discusses professional development experiences related to informal or incidental interactions. Literature consulted (Day, 1995) emphasises informal interactions as vital for professional development as they enable engagements and observation. They facilitate checking against bias in self-reporting and self evaluation, enable school-to-school classroom practice comparisons. Informal interactions while they foster professional development, they occur naturally and individuals themselves may not be aware that they are contributing to their development. Sites of professional development discussed earlier: the programmes, the school and the wider professional sites as types of community interactions, also allow informal/incidental professional development to occur within the planned and intended activities. This section focuses informal sites as they relate to the parents' community and professional bodies.

Teacher-Parents Interactions

Parents, through various forms of support, such as providing for their children and participating in school life, impact on teaching practice. Teachers' sentiments are represented below:

They look at children's books, we tell them weaknesses and strength, they also tell us the child's weaknesses and strengths and advise you to capitalize on strengths. Some parents donate books to the school they are keen to know performance of their kids and can even phone you about mid-years. I get to understand parents' attitudes towards the education of their children and help us on how to deal with some pupils (Zim Teacher 1).

There is evidence that the meetings provided professional development related to understanding the attitudes, views and feelings of parents towards the school, the teacher, the education system and how to handle learners. Thus, teachers gained affective and pedagogic knowledge through hierarchical parent-teacher interactions, teacher telling and also parent telling. Tomlinson (1995) regards good teacher-parent relations and support as effective in fostering teacher professional development experiences, classroom practice and control as well as learner discipline. Some scholars consulted (Anaxagorou, 2007; Bhengu, 2007; Chasokela 1996) indicate that parent-teacher liaison and networking

acknowledges parents as complementary educators. This enhances teacher personal and professional development and heightens school image and standing within the community. The parents' perceptions and views as they relate to their children's learning enabled the development of appropriate strategies for dealing with particular learners.

A good understanding of learners is critical for selection of appropriate content and methods for acting on the object. Knowing one's learners means knowing oneself, one's subject as well as how to teach one's learners well. The scheduled meetings facilitated development and strengthening of parents/teacher relationship as the two parties came face-to-face which association was likely to give rise to subsequent interactions all to benefit the children's learning. From the CHAT framework, parents constitute one dimension of the community within the activity system. The reciprocal relations cited by the Zimbabwean teachers above represent a situation where all nodes of the activity system are enacting their roles according to the rules and division of labour with parents as the community providing psychological tools and artifacts. While the general trend indicated parents' support within school structures in Zimbabwe, limited teacher-parent communities were evident in the SA school contexts. The SA situation confirms observations in literature (Harley, Bertram et al. 1999; Taylor & Mulhall, 2001; World Bank, 2005; Bhengu, 2007) where barriers between communities and schools were noted, schools operating in isolation of their communities and parents displaying apathy or indifference without any interest in what goes on in the school and visiting only as a reaction where a child does not bring a school report. Such situations create contradictions, which are discussed in a later section. The next section discusses professional development through professional bodies outside education.

Professional Organizations

Professional organisations in the context of this study are those bodies that are not into education, but some components of their business benefit education. The teachers worked with professional organizations related to their subject specializations. Extracts from interviews below represent such ties:

Teachers' College lecturers come and present on particular topics. This has been of great benefit to me, I have learnt a lot from these presentations, the way they do their presentations ... this benefits our students as well ... (Zim Teacher 4).

As teachers we learn and our learners learn too. The exhibitions helped to channel my learners. It helps to motivate the learners and as an individual there was professional development, yes, I saw live processes of water reticulation and recycling, electricity, etc. aspects that I had often seen in books, I can now explain them better. Learners met learners from other schools, I met colleagues and we engaged on how to impart to learners back in the classroom (SA Teacher 2).

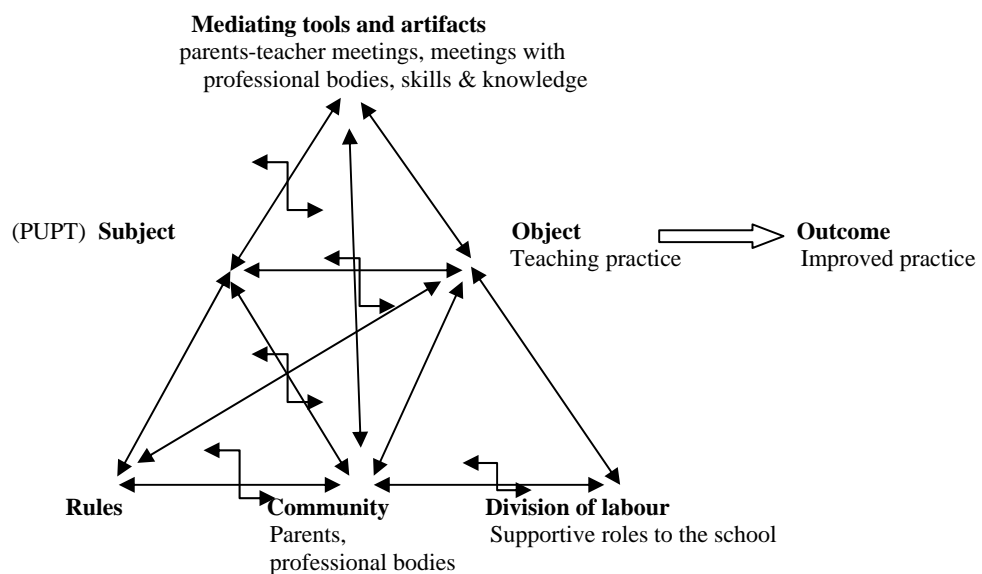
The learning described by Zimbabwean Teacher 4 was to do with pedagogy, 'the way they do it.' Authorities consulted (McLaughlin, 2008; Prawat, 2008) report that collaborations with the private sector enable acquisition of current disciplinary expertise and at the same time enable teachers to experience their students' future workplaces. Such collaborations provide insights into subject related workplace demands and leading edge knowledge, skills and competences as well as teaching/learning knowledge that links theory and practice. The issue of more practical contextualised theory juxtaposed with more theoretically based but largely informed by practice (McLaughlin, 2008; Prawat, 1992) is central to CHAT where theory and practice penetrate, control and affect each other through internalisation and externalisation. Within CHAT, the goal is to make theory, method and praxis inseparable from each other. Comments provided by SA Teacher 2 indicate professional development in two main aspects. The teacher acquired ideas on career guidance which falls under the citizenship, community and pastoral role of the teacher in the Teacher Education Policy (200) Norms and Standards for Educators.

Further, demonstrations and films, promoted four types of learning; attention, retention, production and motivation. Given that the experience was in an out-of-school environment, teachers had an opportunity for meeting and socializing with colleagues from other schools and this offered an opportunity for incidental professional development. Other scholars such as Fernandez, Hauge et al. (2008) note that such collaboration with interested parties outside the school locale provides opportunities for new kinds of expertise to be developed both in the teachers and in their professional organization.

The data presented here shows that interactions with professional bodies fostered informal professional development experiences related to content, pedagogy and PCK. Within CHAT, these sectors represent the community in the activity system which through the division of labour, provides psychological, material, moral and other forms of mediational tools that shape enactment of the object by the subject as illustrated in Figure 6.

Within these diverse communities, tensions are bound to occur. The following concluding section discusses contradictions that emerged from these community interactions.

Figure 6: Professional development through community interactions



Contradictions

The contradictions emerging out of professional development through interactions relate to the teacher-parents' community

Contradictions Related to Teacher-Parents Interactions

Parents are recognized as complimentary partners in education and schools are always making efforts at fostering harmonious and reciprocal teacher-parents relations. Morrison and McIntyre (1998) note that parent-teacher contacts are limited to formal meetings when schools organize consultation/price-giving days. Parents and teachers in urban contexts are often more in contact than rural parents on matters related to student learning and progress

(Dunkin, 1988). Sentiments raised by SA Teacher 5 are in tandem with the above views and are representative of the trend amongst the SA sample group:

December reports are not given to learners, a parent must come, sometimes the parents get very upset why the boy/girl is failing and some parents only listen to their kids even if their kids are lying. They only come once to get reports not to attend meetings, they only come at the end of year either to collect reports or to fight, even if you write a letter saying you want to see them maybe a learner told you a sad story about home and you want to help, they don't pitch up (SA Teacher 5).

The absence of parent-teacher reciprocal relations created three dimensions of contradictions. First subject/community contradiction emerges at two levels. Parents turn down invitations to meetings by the school creating contradictions, and secondly, contradictions are exacerbated when the community eventually comes into the school and abuses the subject, thereby creating a layer of subject/community contradiction. Parents are complementary partners for their children's education, who should play a supportive role in this activity system. Such roles as supporting the school through attendance in meetings, rendering voluntary service to the school is often not forthcoming thereby creating community/division of labour contradictions and community/rule contradictions. Parents were neither following rules nor acting according to the division of labour in this activity system. In Figure 6 such contradictions are represented by elbow double arrow connectors. At the heart of South African Schools Act (SASA) lies the idea of partnership between all people with an interest in education. It is argued that schools will only be greatly improved through joint efforts of parents, educators, learners, members of the local communities, etc. Contradiction therefore plays up as the parents fail to honour that requirement.

Conclusion

Data in this section indicates that professional development experiences were enhanced by reciprocal parent-teacher relations particularly in the Zimbabwean school contexts where parent-teacher meetings constituted a vital component of the school culture and processes. Apart from fostering pedagogical classroom management knowledge and skills, such relations offered insights into parents' perceptions of the school, teachers, system and education of their children. Parents-teacher interactions were limited in the SA school

activity systems. Through interaction with professional bodies, teachers benefited from content, pedagogy and PCK and obtained insightful information about their students' future work places.

For professional development to occur in a rural school, both in school and out-of-school support is vital. Findings related to this aspect are discussed in the following section.

The PUPTs' Professional Development Support

The second sub-question sought to investigate how support by colleagues and the university enhance professional development practices of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools. In relation to this question, literature reviewed in Chapter 3 indicated that school-based support and university support through formal programmes are effective in promoting professional development experiences of these teachers.

School based support in this case relates to supervision and mentoring. An absence of supervisory support, in particular in the SA context, was evident from the analysed data. Such practices deprived the PUPTs of guidance and learning given that supervision enables provision of teacher in-class assistance and development as it were, through jointly coming up with workable modes of classroom engagements and new relationships based on ongoing collaboratively planned programmes. Some PUPTs therefore missed out on this type of scaffolding and learning to apply newly acquired theory and competencies. Many commentators (Acedo, 2002; Hedges, 2002; Mulkeen, 2006; Zehava & Salman, 2008) argue that lack of supervisory support denies trainees due guidance and professional learning, which may result in inefficiency and negligence of the core teaching duties. Given the isolation and remoteness in the rural contexts in which these teachers operated, such deprivation restricted professional development experiences for these PUPTs. The practice overlooked the supervisory value in maintaining, leading, coordinating and directing the work of others to accomplish designated objectives (Gwarinda, 1998) which is even more crucial in rural school settings given the numerous limitations. Lagging behind in the division of labour by any one node of the activity system negatively impacts on the entire system and consequently achievement of the object by the subject may be of

lower quality. Day (1997) alludes to critical friends in collaborative activity systems as enabling increased professional development experiences. My findings are that mentors formed the critical friends who offered unconditional support and guidance, not only as technical experts, but as specialists with human and interpersonal relations, the skills, time, energy and reflexive practice on their own work (Awaya, McEwan et al., 2003; Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn, 2000). Through collaboration in planning, delivery and assessment the PUPTs gained access to the mentor's craft. Research studies suggest that more gains are accrued when collaboration involves clinical supervision going through the stages: pre-observation, lesson demonstration and/or observation and the post-lesson conference (Chakanyuka, Mukeredzi et al., 2006; Fish, 2004; Kerry & Mayes, 1996).

The findings also indicate that the PUPTs benefited from mentor lesson demonstration. Through this activity they observed the teaching/learning process that fostered thinking and acting on what they saw. The post-lesson conference encouraged discussion and feedback on the demonstrated lesson. Literature reviewed in Chapter 3 (Fish, 2004; Kerry & Mayes, 1996; Stephens, 1998) suggests that trainees benefit more if discussion and feedback are conducted immediately subsequent to the observation. Such feedback enabled the PUPT to reflect on mentor's action and further enabled the mentor to lead by example through modelling for the teacher to draw on pedagogically. Mentor support was further provided through supervision of lessons. Lesson observations offered the PUPTs opportunities to learn from their own practice, as the mentor would observe, supervise, assess, facilitate and give developmental feedback. Based on the work of researchers consulted (Chakanyuka, Mukeredzi et al., 2006; Fish, 2004; Kerry & Mayes, 1996; Stephens, 1998) school-based supervision in experiential learning offers a clinical approach to professional development experiences. My findings resonate with these views. However, benefits from mentor support are maximized where the school as an activity system is supportive through appropriate mentoring structures. Literature (Bourdillon, 1999; Harris, Bennett, et al., 1997; Kerry & Mayes, 1996; Russell, 1988) emphasises the need for supportive collaborative environments and structures to enable effective mentoring and supervisory support. However, half the sample in this study experienced either limited or no mentoring support at all within their activity systems thereby spawning contradictions.

The need for supervisory support in particular at school activity system level, and generally from the wider professional sites activity systems involving DoE, was expressed by half the sample as represented in this quotation, “ I need support from within the school, from the subject head and the school management and the DoE. I need somebody to supervise and guide me, to tell me what to do, to help me to grow...” (SA Teacher 6). This issue of support encompasses teacher morale and job satisfaction. Doerger (2009) confirms the link between systematic, sustained supervisory support and teacher job satisfaction and retention particularly in challenging contexts. Enabling and supportive environments from the entire activity systems are critical for effective professional development experiences and classroom delivery for these PUPTs. Other scholars posit that commitment may be enhanced or diminished by collegial and administrative as well as parents’ support (Hargreaves, Comber et al., 1996; Monk, 1997; Mulkeen, 2006). The situation is aggravated in rural school contexts.

Insufficient internal supervisory support and guidance coupled with feelings of entrapment have been linked to teacher burnout, low morale, stress and lack of job satisfaction (Day & Sachs, 2004; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Zehava & Salman, 2008). These observations from literature confirm my findings. Also crucial for the PUPTs’ professional development experiences were aspects of recognition, appreciation and acknowledgement: “Ja, recognition for a good job is important for growth and motivation” (Zim Teacher 5). Academic work by some scholars indicates that image of self-as-teacher and a desire to confirm self-image are critical to unqualified teachers (Goddard & Foster, 2001; Kagan, 1992; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002). Recognition of the PUPTs value and how they compare with colleagues is a powerful weapon for shaping their social and professional identities. Such observations are confirmed by research (Kelchtermans and Ballet 2002; Zehava and Salman 2008). In other words, identities and self-perceptions are constructed through interactions with colleagues in the various activity systems inclusive of the regard attached to them. Thus positive feedback or reinforcement, apart from fostering desirable behaviour, enhances their professional and social identity construction and consequently job satisfaction and professional development. Given that some of these teachers were looked down upon as unqualified temporary teachers, such recognition and

acknowledgement was critical for their confidence, self-efficacy and professional development, and would consequently provide motivation to keep going even when things seemed to be going downhill.

Inclusive of the desire for supervisory and mentoring support, the study discovered that the PUPTs have a whole range of other needs to enhance their professional development experiences in a rural school setting. The following section focuses on those needs.

The PUPTs' Professional Development Needs in a Rural School

The third sub-question sought to identify the professional development needs of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools. In analysing the PUPTs' professional development needs, factors that shaped their professional development in rural schools emerged. Teachers reported that their professional development experiences may be enhanced through support, generally related to psychological and material mediational tools and artefacts, all encompassing and inclusive of supervision, class management and control, pedagogy, and resources. While the aspect of methods may appear contradictory considering that the teachers indicated they had professionally developed in that area, findings suggest a need for more assistance in that area.

A strong desire for pedagogical support, better resources as well as supportive supervision, and ongoing professional development, which are indicated by the reviewed literature (Friedman, 2005; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; McLaughlin, 2008; Southworth & Campbell, 1992; Talmor, Nabel-Heller et al., 1996; USAID, 2006) resonate with my findings. These aspects are discussed in this section. Notwithstanding that class management and control are part of classroom pedagogy, it is necessary to discuss the aspect separately as it was one area that some participants were grappling with. Supervision has been discussed earlier and will therefore not be part of the current discussion

With regard to class management and control of learner indiscipline, my findings are that the SA sample group needed assistance as reflected in this comment: "I need help with

class control, to be taught how to discipline a large group, I do not really know how to deal with so many learners, like 80, in one small class...” (SA Teacher 3). Literature reviewed (Eilam, 2002; Eldar, 1996; Fairbanks, Freedman et al., 2000; Friedman, 2005; Kagan, 1992; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Vonk, 1995; Zehava & Salman, 2008) confirms that disciplinary problems are the most serious challenges faced by newly qualified and unqualified teachers alike. In the absence of the requisite knowledge, skills and assistance, the PUPT may resort to practices experienced as a learner and may adopt techniques that may be contrary to university teachings. Given that classroom control and learner discipline are primarily concerned with building an environment that optimises teacher professional development, it should not be viewed as peripheral but rather as integral to teaching practice particularly in rural contexts where other challenges are at play. As Cohen, Manion and Morrisson (1997) suggest, it constitutes a ‘built in’ element of classroom practice rather than a ‘bolt on’ extra. Further, through learning in the formal domain, the PUPTs developed an understanding of alternative ways of handling misbehaviour other than corporal punishment and exclusion. This illustrates a shift from student discipline to student management, which stresses nurturing of acceptable student behaviour and improved achievement through active engagement and participation in learning activities. Scholars such as Stoll (2004) and Moletsane (1992) suggest such that facilitation involves less emphasis on criticism and punishment, but more on understanding learners, praise and reward. However, notwithstanding the theoretical knowledge gained, from the perspective of the SA sample, learner discipline remained an emotive and controversial issue.

The research literature further indicates that when unqualified teachers possess such knowledge, its application in classroom practice may pose some challenges (Mulkeen, 2006; Tabach & Friedlander, 1997). The PUPTS in these rural schools thus need support in developing conducive learning climates and appropriate discipline cultures in the classroom where student behaviour does not give them pressure and learning proceeds smoothly without undue chatter and noise. Skill and knowledge to handle diverse classes with diverse learner ability levels and backgrounds, to inspire, motivate and uphold attention are some of the capabilities that would assist these rural PUPTs in classroom

management and learner discipline, and consequently enhance their professional development experiences. Research confirms that knowledge and skills of classroom management, control and learner discipline as well as good communication skills enhance classroom practices and professional development (Covert, Williams et al., 1991; Loughran, Brown, & Doecke, 2001; Veenman, 1984).

With regard to teaching strategies, Lliyan (2000) noted that in-service student teachers needed knowledge and skill of handling the group work strategy. Lliyan's finding resonates with my findings, which indicate challenges related to group work. One teacher pointed out; "I need assistance with group work. I have problems in grouping different students, handling group activities, giving feedback..." (Zim Teacher 4). Findings from literature further show that implementation of the new learner-centred teaching strategies, engaging learners in more creative and critical thinking, enabling active learner participation and analytical discussions are often challenging for unqualified and newly qualified teachers alike (Al-Haj, 1999; Zehava & Salman, 2008). Such situations become aggravated in rural schools due to limitations related to geographies. Lack of exposure to learner-centred teaching strategies during their own learning apparently contributes to lack of acclimatization to the advocated.

Other pedagogical needs identified by my study are related to syllabus interpretation and implementation. The SA teachers in particular raised needs in this respect: "I need to be developed especially this NCS thing, I don't understand it, I can't use it, don't know what is expected of me" (SA Teacher 1). SA Teacher 5 also added; "I have some problems with NCS interpretation. I don't even know what I must do I only know (kuti) you have an LO1, LO2, LO3 as 1, 2, 3 but I don't know what it is, it's bad ..." (SA Teacher 5). These PUPTs, like all teachers are at the 'chalk face' as key curriculum implementers, hence their role involves acting on prescriptions, meeting expectations and handling situations and predictions (Gatawa, 1995). Prescriptions are what they must do, expectations are what they need to consider, and situations and predictions are the 'how' and 'what' they are going to do. In the context of the SA teachers in this study, the NCS is the prescription providing central guidance. How the PUPT acts on the object through mediation by the

NCS is dependent on what they think they should do, rather than what they understand they must. Hence, as chief implementer, in the absence of appropriate support and guidance evident in these rural settings, the PUPT's interpretation then depends on professional level, personal qualities, context, and learner characteristics.

The limited skill and knowledge of interpretation of the NCS documents is confirmed by some scholars consulted, who indicate inadequate training received by teachers regarding analysis, interpretation and implementation of SA OBE NCS (Harley & Wedekind, 2004). Teacher competence enormously shapes implementation and the knowledge and skill limitations spawn curriculum distortion. Reviewed literature (Gatawa, 1995 ; Whitaker, 1995) suggests that knowledge and skills as well as initiative to adapt and not adopt the curriculum plan are pivotal for the teaching practice and teacher professional development. A motivated and appropriately skilled and knowledgeable teacher is able to adapt the curriculum and achieve all curriculum aims and objectives. However, in this context, acting on the object was likely to be at a lower level and this created tensions and contradictions.

With regard to resources, while these PUPTs strive to engage in teaching practice, findings indicate that efforts are stymied by grossly inadequate resource support and this shapes their professional development experiences. Literature examined suggests that while government spending on education in most countries globally has improved, this is not reflected in learning and educational resource provision in particular in rural contexts (Al-Haj, 1999; Zehava & Salman, 2008). These mediating tools and artifacts are in short supply in these rural schools. In the SA context this is compounded by the general trend of limited floor spaces that accommodate big student numbers and minimize professional development in these rural secondary schools as reflected by SA Teacher 2: "Very little professional development takes place in a rural school, in these small classrooms. I would be lying to say there is any professional development in the classroom considering my large classes and the limited resources." Taylor and Mulhall (2006) and Mulkeen (2006) confirm that small classrooms often found in rural settings with big learner numbers make practical teaching and learning, and teacher professional development difficult. While the

issue of large numbers was not evident on the Zimbabwean contexts, severe under-resourcing was highlighted. These physical constraints and an absence of professional support, guidance and motivation often lead to low performance levels in rural teachers and learners alike, which may affect the PUPTs professional development experiences.

All the needs cited above related to supervisory support, class management, pedagogy and resources have a direct bearing on the subject-object relationship. The situation gave rise to related contradictions which inhibited effective achievement of the object by the subject. Thus given the needs and challenges discussed in this section, it is important to understand how the PUPTs conceived their professional development experiences. Findings related to their conceptions of professional development experiences in a rural secondary school context are the focus of the following discussion.

PUPTs' Conceptions of Professional Development in a Rural Secondary School

The fourth sub-question of the study was: What are the conceptions of the PUPTs of their professional development experiences at rural secondary school level? To address this question, Chapter 3 posited that professional development experiences of PUPTs in rural schools are underpinned by relational dimensions, interdependency and personal agency, and life-long learning. Concomitant with this view, as described in the following paragraphs, my findings are that relational dimensions: personal, interpersonal, intra-professional and inter-professional interdependency and agency, as well as life-long learning, sustain the PUPTs professional development experiences in the rural schools given the severe under-resourcing. These aspects are discussed in the following section.

Relational Dimensions and Agency

Academic work reviewed in this thesis suggests that relational aspects of interdependence are central to effective teacher professional development experiences particularly in rural contexts (Commonwealth, 1999; Commonwealth Human Rights Front, 1999; HSRC, 2005; Peresu, Ndundu et al., 1999; UNESCO, 2004). My findings show that collaborative

practices and an ethos where there is collegiality, mutual bonding, and critical friendships developed on openness and trust reinforce PUPTs' professional development experiences in these rural secondary schools as alluded to by Zimbabwean Teacher 1: "My professional development experiences mean ability and confidence to share with colleagues, doing team teaching, calling upon each other to teach or elaborate on some areas, this is developmental." This ability and confidence to foreground one's limitations has been noted by Graven (2004) as vital for professional development. Sharing teaching loads both in full or in part and maintaining vertical and horizontal relations, extending them beyond the central to the neighbouring nodes of the activity system facilitated professional development in a variety of ways for these PUPTs in rural secondary schools. SA Teacher 1 also raised similar comments: "Relating well with superiors, colleagues, students, your community that you live in and beyond that. Ja! You grow professionally, you learn ..." Supportive relations of this nature foster rather than wear away professional development experiences. Activity systems in double-loop collective learning practices eliminate disciplinary margins and foster interpersonal and interdepartmental interdependency and agency, which support both teacher and learner learning.

Concomitant with good relations findings further suggest familiarity with the community as critical for professional development; "You need an understanding of your rural set-up, the culture of the area, it is about understanding your people ..." (SA Teacher 1). These views echoed by both Zimbabwean and SA participants resonate with conceptions that individual mental functioning can only be understood by standing outside the individual and exploring the social and cultural processes from which they are constructed. It is only through tracing structures and processes of intra-mental functioning to their inter-mental precursors that individual behaviour can be understood (Palmer, 1998; Vygotsky, 1987; Waite, 2006; Wertsch, 1995). Knowledge of the culture within and around the activity system therefore provided tools and artefacts in the form of appropriate insights into interactions and relations within those communities thereby professionally developing the teacher. As noted by Palmer (1998) knowing one's students means knowing how to teach them well and that knowledge means growth.

In collaborative activity systems, there is generally a collective response to demands and challenges, reinforcing and affirming each other, thus enabling effective professional development experiences. Such practices are broadly entrenched in individual and organisational professional and social matters, which may encourage the PUPs to share both professional and personal problems in a trusting atmosphere. Collegial interactions such as advice-giving, skill exchange and sharing mediating tools, all promote teacher professional development experiences. Collaborative activity systems in this practice facilitate active internalisation and externalisation through on-going negotiation and renegotiation in enacting responsibilities and tasks in the activity system (Daniels, 2004; Davydov, 2004; Edwards & D'Arcy, 2004; Waite, 2006). However, within such dynamic activity systems, conflicts and contradictions play up, which demand actions of translation and negotiation and consequently generate forces and impetus for professional development, change and transformation (Daniels, 2004; Engestrom, 2001). While a picture similar to the one described above exists, a number of school contexts in this study failed to provide for such inclusive learning cultures.

In addition, findings show interpersonal agency that includes intra-professional and inter-professional relations outside the school activity system. This includes school-to-school relations within subject collectives at cluster level and other community dimensions as indicated earlier, inclusive of parent-teacher relations. Good relations with parents and other communities enhance teacher personal and professional development experiences (Friedman & Krongold, 1993; Puk & Haines, 1999; Roth & Tobin, 2004).

Personal Agency

Scholars such as Bandura (1997) Zimmerman and Cleary (2006) and Frost (2009) consulted in this study concur that it is the belief in one's self-regulative capability to attain set goals that forms the core of a steadfast meaning of personal agency. Findings indicate that personal agency is critical for the PUPs professional development experiences in the backdrop of severe resource limitations in rural secondary school contexts. Their agency draws on their self-efficacy and demands their self-regulative capabilities. Reviewed literature further suggests that personal agency involves goal setting, self-monitoring and

self-regulative capabilities for goal attainment (Frost, 2009; Zimmerman & Cleary, 2006). Findings reveal that specific intentional actions and choices the PUPTs undertake to achieve desired ends and outcomes through personal controls constitute their personal agency. Given the resource limitations, the PUPTs instructional choices and decisions are all to do with their personal agency and these processes foster their professional development. Their effective personal agency enables successful interpersonal agency (interdependence) that results from their ability to communicate their needs and collaborate with colleagues to achieve goals. Thus it is through their personal agency that their professional development is promoted.

Secondly, for PUPTs, the level of personal agency is shaped by diverse contextual and other factors. Bandura (1997) and Zimmerman and Cleary concur that context, autonomy and competence, as well as self-efficacy, shape teachers' personal agency. Thus for these PUPTs, personal agency beliefs, the school context, their expectations, including desire for professional development, all play a role in their agentic instructional priorities, choices and decisions. Thus, the issue of a supportive school culture is crucial for effective personal agency for these PUPTs given the limited resource situation.

Thirdly, closely related to personal agency, my findings show that teachers conceived their professional development experiences as underpinned by hard work and the ability to operate given the limited resources. Researchers such as Morrison and McIntyre (1998) posit that teacher role modelling, hard work, commitment, dedication, and being progressive and positive at all times foster teacher professional development. My findings concur with these researchers: "To me, my professional development experiences in a rural school mean growth through hard work, sacrifice and dedication (Zim Teacher 2). "I just think of absence of resources in these schools, you struggle to come up with a lesson. But you learn yes, you develop, the challenges make you learn ..." (SA Teacher 5).

Sacrificing refers to giving up something for a greater reason. With this conception, these teachers gave themselves up for their students' learning. The view resonates with literature where teaching is recognized as a social and moral function carrying a lot of responsibility

for learners and society (Day, 1997; Eraut, 2008; Sockett, 1993; Sykes, 1998). Dedication in this context, suggests voluntary consecration or relinquishment of something to somebody. Teachers relinquished their time in search for tools and artifacts, sacrificing some of their material benefits for professional satisfaction and development. Given the limited resource provision, teachers further viewed their professional development experiences as driven by having to ‘make-do’ to effectively act on the object: “... it means learning to make-do and effectively teach, a continuous search for resources you have to learn to be resourceful and creative and take initiative. It’s a learning process. Ja! It’s all about improvisation...” (Zimbabwean Teacher 4). The idea of ‘make-do’ implies using whatever is available to effectively act on the object and within processes of creativity, resourcefulness and improvisation, teachers experienced professional development. This view of having to ‘make do’ resonates with ideas of some authorities consulted (Pillay & Govinden, 2007) who note that teachers creatively resist the constraints within their classroom and school contexts to reconfigure what it means to be a teacher. Through this process, satisfy the definition of teachers’ work; organizing systematic learning (Morrow, 2007). Improvisation and having to ‘make do’ demands reading and research as an on-going process. This aspect of life-long learning as one of the drivers of their professional development experiences in a rural school is discussed in the next section.

Life-long Learning

The very nature of teaching locates these PUPTs in life-long learning, given that they are informally in practice all the time and this positions them as learners throughout their professional lives. To be typical life-long learners, research suggests that there is a need for collaborative and supportive school environments (Bandura, 1997; Frost, 2009; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001) Such environments enable teacher voluntary engagement in learning activities: displaying the love of learning for the sake of it. They demonstrate reflexivity and self-direction to enhance their professional development experiences and life-long learning.

These teachers described life-long learning as related to the search for new information: “I see professional development as continuous improvement, growth and transformation, a

continuous process of reading and research, you are dealing with dynamic processes so you need the ability to adapt to changing situations.” (Zim Teacher 3). Possession of a positive outlook of the importance of learning constitutes one of the critical aspects of life-long learning and effective professional development. Findings from scholars consulted (Doring, 2009; Helterbran, 2005) suggest that the very involved nature of teaching renders limited occasions for collaborative professional development experiences as they relate to life-long learning. This finding from literature may resonate with findings in this study where teachers alluded to spending a lot of time in the search for mediating tools and artifacts. These PUPTs needed support to develop their professional skills and knowledge as a life-long learning activity.

This section has illustrated that life-long learning for these teachers was linked mainly to the search for tools and artifacts. Given that the study worked with two distinct international contexts, the next section examines how professional development experiences of the PUPTs is shaped by these contexts.

How the Differing Contexts Shape Professional Development Experiences

This section attempts to answer the fifth sub-question: How do the differing contexts at school, system and national level affect professional development experiences? Although my data does not provide definitive information, there are some indications that suggest some differences in the way professional development experiences take place. Hence my discussion here is mainly speculative without coming to conclusions.

First, with regard to the nature of professional development, management and administration of school processes and activities in the SA context, apparently these do not engender professional development. Schools contexts reflect a picture of dysfunctional systems that are likely to discourage rather than foster professional development practices. On the contrary, the Zimbabwean school contexts generally seem to present functional systems and supportive environments and cultures built on in-school supportive structures. Such school environments are likely to encourage teacher professional learning and development. Literature surveyed indicates that administrative support and pleasant school climates and cultures are essential for effective teacher professional development

experiences, classroom delivery, as well as job satisfaction and retention (Day, 1995; Doring, 2009; Helterbran, 2005; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001).

Second, while the SA context seems to offer better support in terms of resourcing, other non-material forms such as collegial support, supervision and guidance are apparently limited and this tends to limit teacher professional development. The Zimbabwean context is severely stymied by under-resourcing, which may hinder adequate teacher professional development. However, the presence of collegial support structures coupled with personal and interpersonal agency tend to maximize teacher learning and professional development. Many commentators (Day, 1995; Lieberman & Mace, 2008a; Little & McLaughlin, 1994; McLaughlin, 2008) allude to interdependence, collegiality, collaborative practices and ethos as well as professional mutual bonding as effective in encouraging teacher professional development experiences. Other scholars also suggest that alienation by colleagues and superiors in addition to inadequate or even absent on-site supervisory support, guidance and motivation have been linked to teacher burnout, low morale, stress, and lack of job satisfaction (Day, Fernandez et al., 2000; Graven, 2004; McLaughlin, 2008; Prawat, 1992). The experiences of many of the SA participants suggest that this applies to the SA context.

Third, the SA context again presents two scenarios: a situation where many teachers are quite disillusioned and want to get out of the profession. There are also teachers who tend to be in schools where the environment itself and the culture are apparently dysfunctional. The school systems do not seem to offer and attach any pull factors for teacher job satisfaction and retention. There is a lot of talk about too much paperwork, having to constantly complete forms for the department and forms for the school, painting an impression of more writing than classroom practice. Such factors linked to how the system and the curriculum are organized, might be a push factor out of the profession. In such complex situations, teacher learning and professional development are constrained. Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002), Day and Sachs (2002) and Zehava and Salman (2008) concur that teacher commitment may either be engendered or reduced by administrative and other forms of support.

Fourth, wanting to leave the profession may also be linked to the pull/push factors in the profession. The Zimbabwean system, presents a situation where teachers envisage a future in the profession and this apparently provides some incentive for engaging in professional development. While one may want to conceive this as that view of teaching as a calling and a vocation, issues of limited job opportunities outside the teaching profession may also not be ruled out. A situation where one sees no future in the profession diminishes any real incentive to engage in professional development as one envisages him/herself out of that profession.

Further, the way teachers and the teaching profession are viewed in society may also influence the way teachers themselves view and engage in professional development. The Zimbabwean context tends to see teaching as a moral enterprise as opposed to a 'job', consequently teachers are seemingly regarded as performing moral functions. This conception of the teaching profession and teachers resonates with the broad definition as given in the literature in Chapter 3 where teaching is viewed as going above and beyond financial gains, but fulfils intellectual, professional, social, and moral purposes with responsibility for learners, the school and the community, and offering a social service throughout life (Eraut, 2008; Ndhlovu, 1999; Nicholls, 2000; SACE, 2004; Sockett, 1993; Sykes, 1998).

Sixth, the feelings of disillusionment and despondency alluded to earlier on as push factors out of the teaching profession may be pointing to the way teaching is viewed regarding its extrinsic value as a stepping stone while looking for a 'job'. In a wider context, teaching offers easy access to employment, hence its convenience value. Scholars such as Hoyle and Megarry (1987) and Adendorff, Mason, Modiba, Faragher and Kunene (1999) note that while teaching may not generally be seen as an ideal profession like medicine and law, it shares the same location with these 'ideal' professions on the continuum. However, the low salaries have tended to betray its professional status because teachers are towards the bottom end of the salary scales. This may apparently be one of the push factors in the SA context, which is likely to minimize professional development. While issues of seeking employment in higher paying jobs outside teaching may not be very apparent on the

Zimbabwean scene, the link between specializations and job opportunities out there may be a contributory factor. This may explain the apparent commitment to the teaching profession, and to professional development in the Zimbabwean context.

Furthermore, conceptions and activities apparently portray national related processes that are wider than and transcend the nature of school systems, teacher organizations and teacher unions. The SA context portrays an apparent unstable environment fraught with teacher frustrations and low morale coupled with learner despondency, demotivation indiscipline and absenteeism. In an environment where teachers are either absent, not punctual or present and not tending their classes, without seeing all that kind of practice and attitude as wrong, it is not likely that professional development would generally be viewed as a priority. In this kind of environment with basic levels of professionalism either very minimal or non-existent, meaningful professional development is very unlikely.

Lastly, literature indicates that teacher professionalism encompasses notions of professional accountability: ethical and moral commitment to serve interests of learners and a professional obligation to the system and society, such commitments and obligations are overlooked (Adendorff, Mason et al., 1999; Eraut, 2008; Ndhlovu, 1999; Nicholls, 2000; SACE, 2004; Sockett, 1993; Sykes, 1998; University, 2000; ZIMTA, 2009). Consequently the teaching practice described above falls out of the broad understanding of the meaning of a teaching professional. As professional development is not just an individual commitment or activity, but linked to a wider conception of work, in this regard a conception of what it means to be a teaching professional in that particular job as a teacher, such practices and behaviours may be pointing to how teaching is broadly conceived. This discussion has revealed two contrasting patterns out of the two contexts.

Conclusion

This chapter started by discussing the realms in which the PUPTs experience professional development in the formal domain. Teachers' experiences in this domain related to content, pedagogy and PCK. With regard to pedagogy, their professional development experiences revolved around teaching strategies, class management, assessment and

evaluation in relation to learner involvement. These aspects however, came through discussion and debate thus they were more pronounced in the experiential domain, and are therefore discussed to some detail in that section. Issues of classroom autonomy, collaboration, interpersonal interdependency and agency, limited resource utilization and growth in relation to attitudes were also experienced.

The chapter then proceeded to address the PUPTs' professional development experiences within the school site under two realms: through practice and through meetings. Professional development through experience was tackled by examining areas of supervision and mentoring, lesson preparation and delivery. Findings suggest that lesson delivery provided professional development experiences related to preparation, supervision, teaching strategies, class management, assessment and evaluation and, pastoral roles. However, with regard to professional development through lesson preparation particularly in the SA context, very limited experiences were noted suggesting a tendency to equate content knowledge with preparation. Concomitant with preparation, findings also suggest limited knowledge and ability to interpret and implement the NCS by the SA teachers. Data analysis further indicated an absence of supervisory support in the SA school contexts depriving the PUPTs of critical supervisory guidance and support. Contrarily, professional development revolving around content, pedagogical and PCK was experienced through supervision and clinical guidance in mentoring in the Zimbabwean school settings.

While professional development was experienced with regard to class management and control, learner discipline and learner behaviours inclusive of issues of learner handling in diversity, learner indiscipline remains a challenge in the SA school contexts. Professional development experienced through lesson delivery, teaching strategies and assessment related to content, pedagogy and PCK through selection and utilization of various pedagogies and modes of assessment and feedback. The whole issue of assessment enabled reflexive professional development experiences in their practice, on their practice and about their practice in relation to learner performance. Another dimension of professional development was experienced through handling learner diversity and counselling for diverse forms of learner challenges.

Given the resource limitations in the Zimbabwean activity systems, professional development was experienced through interdepartmental interdependency and agency in collegial exchange and knowledge and resource sharing. Data further showed limited parent-teacher reciprocal relations in the SA context; contrarily the Zimbabwean school settings presented parents-teacher meetings as a vital component of school structures and traditions. Such meetings enabled professional development through insights into parents' perceptions of the teachers, the school, the education system and performance of their children.

With regard to professional development experiences through school meetings, a sub-site of professional development within the school site, my findings show two contrasting patterns where management and administration of school processes and activities in the SA context apparently did not engender professional development. There was an apparent absence of appropriate school structures such as meetings that assemble teachers and foster both collaborative and individual learning. The Zimbabwean school contexts generally presented supportive environments and cultures built into school structures and traditions. Different kinds of school meetings enabled professional development through sharing experiences and insights into content, pedagogy, PCK as well as affective knowledge at both collegial and hierarchical mechanisms.

The wider professional sites, specialisation clusters, teacher professional associations, DoE/MoE, and teacher unions provided professional development experiences revolving around content and pedagogy. Further, through these interactions in the diverse out-of-school sites: the PUPTs experienced professional development related to content, pedagogy, PCK, and in relation to social and economic issues, and enabled teacher learning from their own as well as from others' practices and experiences.

While supervision and mentoring provide some essential tools and artifacts, half the participants did not experience professional development in this regard due to an absence of such structures, notwithstanding the need for such support. Thus PUPTs needs relate to support in class management, pedagogy and resources in that situation, teachers had to 'make-do' with whatever they could lay their hands on to enhance acting on the object.

Further, personal agency enhances professional development, but the context plays a part at the agentic level. These teachers conceive their professional development as underpinned by hard work, improvisation and having to 'make-do' particularly in the Zimbabwean context. With regard to context, two contrasting patterns emerge out of the SA and Zimbabwean settings, in part perhaps because of the different ways in which the teaching profession is viewed. The Zimbabwean context tends to encourage teacher professional development while the SA context apparently limits professional development practices.

Chapter 8 attempts to explain professional development experiences of the PUPTs by juxtaposing the findings against the theoretical framework and literature and drawing some conclusions and synthesising the study.

Chapter 8

Discussion, Conclusions and Synthesis

Introduction

As pointed out in Chapter 1, the global imperatives to meet EFA commitments regarding accessing education for every child, youth and adult have internationally met with challenges related to teacher supply and demand, in particular in rural areas in developing countries. Given that in many developing countries internationally, more than half the population is located in rural areas (Lewin & Stuart, 2003; UNESCO, 2003; World Economic Forum SA, 2009) teacher provision challenges would be more acute in such settings. Further, the EFA imperatives, in addition to addressing issues of education access across all levels, attempts have encompassed improvement and/or upholding the quality of education particularly in rural contexts (Chikoko, 2006; Taylor & Mulhall, 2006). However, these global challenges coupled with trends related to problems of deployment of qualified competent teachers to rural settings, EFA attempts triggered recruitment of professionally unqualified graduates into the school system and provided them with training while in classroom practice (UNESCO, 2003; World Bank, 2005).

Discourse on teacher development related to this model has raised numerous questions regarding its effectiveness in terms of the following: worthwhileness of getting professionally unqualified graduate teachers into classrooms, graduate teacher retention in rural contexts, and provision of material and psychological mediating tools as well as professional development to turn them into qualified competent teachers. This therefore makes understanding how such teachers professionally learn, develop and grow in rural contexts worthwhile. As the teachers explored in this investigation constitute professionally unqualified graduates practicing in rural contexts, studying them locates this enquiry within bigger debates on teacher supply and demand, recruitment, retention, and EFA.

The inquiry explored professional development experiences of professionally unqualified practicing teachers in rural secondary schools. Two international institutional sites (ZOU and UKZN) were involved and the study sought to answer one key question:

How do the PUPTs engage in professional development practices in rural secondary schools? To answer this key question, it was necessary to unpack it into five subsidiary questions, which needed addressing:

- What is the nature of professional development practices of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools?
- How does support by colleagues and the university enhance professional development practices of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools?
- What are the professional development needs of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools?
- What are the conceptions of the PUPTs of their professional development experiences at rural secondary school level?
- How do the differing contexts at school, system and national level affect the professional development experiences?

Answering these questions would enable the thesis to explain the PUPTs' professional development experiences in rural secondary schools. The preceding chapters (6 and 7) presented the findings addressing these questions. This chapter analyses, discusses and synthesizes findings explaining how the PUPTs experience professional development in rural secondary schools. Informed by the findings, using propositions suggested in Chapter 4 of the thesis, the chapter explains professional development experiences in that light and extracts some lessons for professional development of PUPTs in Zimbabwe and SA in general, and the teachers studied in particular.

Discussion

As discussed in Chapter 4, this study draws on the CHAT theoretical framework that provided the lens for understanding professional development experiences of the PUPTs through the various community dimensions. Informed by this framework, five exploratory

propositions about professional development experiences of PUPs in rural secondary schools were tendered. The five propositions as suggested in Chapter 4 relate to nature of professional development experiences, professional development support and needs, conceptions of professional development and how the differing contexts shape professional development experiences. Generated data, presented in Chapter 6 and 7 were used to explore these propositions and this section discusses and synthesizes conclusions in that light.

The analysis presented in the preceding chapters has drawn on the CHAT theoretical framework. In trying to understand, analyse, interpret and explain professional development experiences theoretically, CHAT offered an appropriate theoretical lens. The framework provided a useful methodological tool through its language of description in terms of analysing and understanding the interactions between various elements within the activity system. In analysing data through CHAT, it is apparent that professional development practices occur in all sorts of different domains and levels.

The CHAT framework, however, has not been entirely helpful in terms of analysing the processes of professional development, particularly in understanding variations in professional development in the domains and levels of formality and experience. CHAT tends to generalize without looking ‘in’ the activity to see exactly how professional development occurs within collective engagement in the domains and levels. The model does not differentiate between different kinds of activities. In other words, any activity may be placed within the model. CHAT therefore provides a generic lens that allows for examination of any activity, but because it can be applied to any activity, it does not allow for detailed differentiation between different kinds of activity where professional development experiences have occurred.

Further, one of the difficulties with the CHAT framework is that it is premised on the notion of the object as the true motive. “It is exactly the object of an activity that gives it a determined direction ... The object of an activity is its true motive” (Kozulin, 2003:116). However, it is very difficult for a researcher to establish the true motive. Thus, one

problem I had in analysing this data is grappling with this issue of the object of activity as its true motive and how to establish the true motive of the activity. So it is possible that the activity is geared towards something that has a different motive to the motive that I identified in terms of my thesis, which was exploring professional development experiences of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools. It would become a major problem for the analysis if we were making an incorrect assumption about the true motive when the true motive might be something further down the track, as the motive is difficult to establish empirically within the complex life system.

What the model looks at is the object, subject, outcome, which is what we are ultimately really interested in. The activity is professional development and the object is teaching practice, which should be transformed to improved practice. Ultimately it does not matter whether we are able to establish the true motive or not, because the subject will still act on the object. Certain activities are going to be driven by different motives at different times so professional development is not only going to be driven by a single motive, but by a combination of motives such as the push and pull school factors. While the theory provides useful descriptive language in terms of analysing, I have to some extent set aside the issue of motive within my model because it is very difficult to establish what motive is. The point is that the observed activity remains the same whatever the motive is. So one can speculate about motive and in this case there might be differences between Zimbabwean and SA teachers that can be explained in terms of the motivation. However, this is not central to my analytical frame but de-linking the motive from the object and the outcome becomes one of the factors within the framework that needs to be dealt with separately. I need to acknowledge this as a tension within the theory, which emerged out of my data analysis.

Consequently, I have examined literature around professional learning to try and build a typology that allows understanding the distinction between these different types of activity in order to use it in conjunction with CHAT. From the analysis of literature around types of professional development, I draw on the notion of types of professional learning (Reid's quadrants and Lieberman's overlapping realms) to develop a domain-based typology to

help analyse the PUPTs' experiences of professional development within the domains. Literature on professional development suggests that teacher professional development may be examined from many angles and each one gives a slightly different outlook. Reid provides quadrants of teacher professional learning on axes of formal-informal and planned-incidental (Fraser, Kennedy et al., 2007).

Their conception of formal learning includes teacher module classes, DoE courses, in school courses and staff development meetings. Informal learning encompasses staffroom chats as well as corridor and photocopier conversations. The planned – incidental axis contains such learning coming through planned meetings and web-based arranged learnings, falling under the planned realm, and incidental encompassing learning through sharing professional experiences at assessment moderation meetings, and incidental conversations at teacher network meetings. Lieberman (1993) on the other hand suggests three broad encompassing and overlapping circles composed of learning through consultations, conferences and workshops; school learning through teaching, mentoring and research, and out of school learning through subject networks, partnerships and professional development centres emanating from the teachers' networking efforts.

The models of understanding professional development articulated by Reid and Lieberman differ in some aspects. While Lieberman, talks of consultations, conferences and workshops, according to Reid these represent the formal structural professional development opportunities. Learning through teaching, mentoring and research may be likened to the planned and structured experiential learning, which is apparently overlooked by Reid's quadrants in Fraser, Kennedy et al., (2007). Finally, networking, which may represent relationships established through teacher efforts and with no direct relevance to attainment of a qualification, may be likened to informal /incidental professional development as suggested by Reid in Fraser, Kennedy et al., (2007). However, because Reid gives a blurred distinction between incidental and informal learning and between formal and planned learning, and also does not visibly locate experiential learning, the model is not particularly helpful for my purposes. Lieberman on the other hand fails to

clearly articulate formal learning. While these concepts would still be useful for my purposes, they would create some gaps.

One may also want to understand professional development through a classification of domains or examine it by looking at the process of who initiates the professional development, i.e. where does the activity come from? However, none of the models quite capture the full range of activities that emerge out of my data. Hence, for my purposes I am separating and discussing the findings by drawing on a typology of four domain-based distinctions: formal domain, non-formal domain, informal domain and experiential domain. The typology illustrated in Figure 8 accommodates the gaps that would be created by the Reid and Lieberman models. My typology provides greater conceptual coverage. Developing this typology is not meant to imply very hard and fast boundaries between domains, but certain dimensions of formal learning may come through the experiential domain. Informal learning certainly would also draw on the experiential domain but this would happen outside of the realm of day-to-day teaching. The non-formal and formal domains can also be quite closely connected, but it remains an issue of whether they are credit bearing and bankable, whether they need the qualification or they constitute professional development for its own sake.

Formal learning occurs through opportunities that are explicitly planned and structured and established by formal institutions and organs such as ZOU and UKZN, which include taught courses and modules leading to certification or gaining a qualification. Thus, the formal domain in this context refers to portable and bankable learning leading to PGDE/PGCE. Non-formal learning is distinct from formal and informal learning. It refers to opportunities that are characteristically planned, pre-arranged and structured by some organs or establishments.

Non-formal learning may be formal but does not directly contribute to the (PGDE/PGCE) qualification. In other words, non-formal learning, albeit similar to formal in so far as it is intentional, planned and structured, is not credit bearing, formally portable or bankable.

Informal learning opportunities are those Lieberman (1993) describes as sought and established by the teacher through networking and other partnerships (associations) and involve the kinds of things Reid's Quadrants refer to as incidental corridor culture 'whispers'. This type of learning emanates from incidental opportunities that are spontaneous and unpredictable (teacher exchanges at tea break, at the photocopier, etc.). Informal learning is neither creditable nor structured, and occurs not in the context of work.

Experiential learning which is generally defined as learning by doing, is similar to formal learning in as much as it is planned and structured, but distinct from it in the sense that it occurs through the process of performing core-functions of being a teacher. It does not require a teacher nor is it learning about being a teacher or hearing people talking about being a teacher - it is about practicing in the diverse roles of being a teacher. This purpose of planning is, however, neither directly linked to getting a qualification nor learning about the profession, the planning in this context is for doing the job. Thus learning in this context is incidental to that process in a sense, as the process impacts on the job and the individual ends up learning about what it means to be a teacher. This, however, happens outside formal learning, when one is performing core functions of being a teacher. Further, experiential learning from another angle may be viewed as portable and bankable, but only through recognition of prior learning (RPL) where some formal qualifications recognize experience and develop some way of assessing that experience through maybe a portfolio or a demonstration of the practice.

Domains of Professional Learning

With regard to the key question that informed the study and also to address the first sub-question, this thesis aimed first to explore the nature of professional development experiences of the PUPs in rural secondary schools. In trying to answer the question where professional development occurs, Chapter 7 identified four sites, namely: through the programme, in the school, in the wider professional sites, and through interactions. That is how data was presented. In Chapter 8 the site based evidence will now be analysed

and presented in terms of domains of learning: formal, non-formal, informal and experiential. The domains are reflected in Figure 8.

Professional Development through Formal Learning

Professional development in the formal domain is shaped primarily by the programme design and imperatives. The connections to specific contexts of the PUPTs' school and life world are determined by how they engage with the process of learning. The programme becomes powerful in their professional development if they are able to connect the knowledge gained formally to experiential learning. Hence, some find the programme relevant while others do not see the relevance because they cannot connect learning in the two domains. Data analysis indicated that professional development in the formal domain related to content, pedagogy and PCK. Pedagogy centred on lesson delivery in relation to teaching strategies and learner involvement, class management, and assessment and evaluation. However, in this particular domain the aspects were only experienced through various forms of discussion and debate, and became more pronounced through the experiential domain where the PUPTs connected the formal and the experiential learning. Thus, given the space limitations and also to avoid unnecessary repetition, all aspects, except teaching strategies, are discussed in the experiential domain. Professional development with regard to classroom autonomy, collaboration and interdependency and agency in relation to limited resource utilization and, growth with regard to feelings of empowerment and attitudinal change were also experienced through discussion in the formal domain.

With regard to teaching strategies, literature reviewed in this thesis Fraser, Kennedy, Reid and McKinney (2007) views professional development as a supportive process that enhances the teacher's professional thought, planning and practice in the classroom. Concomitant with the literature, my findings confirm that disciplinary content alone is inadequate for effective teaching ability for these PUPTs. It needs to be rooted in well-documented strategic pedagogical knowledge. The knowledge of strategies offers teachers the ability to consider a range of possibilities for classroom delivery. With this knowledge the PUPTs can integrate their decisions and performance, reflecting in their practice and

adapting to incidentals in the process and can justify the choices, decisions and actions that they take.

Further, it is the mediational tools and artifacts that enable the subject to act on the object (Engestrom, 2004; Lompscher, 2004; Billet, 2008). The teacher can only engage in the practices of teaching with certain mediational means to engage in teaching practice. Teaching strategies inclusive of PCK for instance formed the mediational means in this context, which provided the ‘auxiliary stimulus’; i.e. conceptual capital to enable the subject to act on the object. The knowledge of those mediational means was acquired through the formal domain and would need to be connected to the experiential in the practice.

Figure 7: Domain based typology of professional development



Without this conceptual capital, i.e. pedagogical knowledge, the teacher cannot effectively act on the object, nor can they transform it into an outcome. Thus, effective professional development through teaching/learning occurs with the appropriate knowledge and skills of teaching strategies.

Findings further reveal that professional development experiences through the formal domain enabled change in teacher practices evidenced by improved students' achievement. Writers such as Guskey (2002) and Dall'Alba and Sandberg (2006) indicate that beliefs and attitudes on teaching are derived through empirical classroom practice evidence. My data suggests that the PUPT learnt, engaged with the theory, were informed by it, and then changed their practice. The new learning and practices consequently gave rise to improved learner achievement. Improvement in teacher practice is attributed to the newly learnt and adopted teaching strategies and their successful implementation spawned attitude change. Again, this resonates with findings by some researchers (Fraser, Kennedy et al., 2007; Guskey, 2002; Said, 1994) where professional development improves teachers' knowledge and skills' base to foster classroom practice and learner achievement. Within the CHAT framework, the perceived difference between the state of the object and the outcome result in continuous reflection, evaluation and re-evaluation of the object against desired levels of the outcome. This ongoing reflection and re-evaluation eventually leads to high levels of transformation of the object to an outcome that will manifest in higher levels of professional development and learner achievement (Waite, 2006).

While findings generally indicate professional development experiences through the formal domain, two SA teachers on the contrary claimed that they were not benefiting from the programme. For example one of them mentioned that "... anybody could be a teacher when given a textbook..." (SA Teacher 6). According to these teachers there had been no difference in their practice from the time of their enrolment, notwithstanding that this was their second semester of the final year. While these teachers made these claims, which were apparently inaccurate, what may have been happening is that they were failing to make the theory-practice connections. Such a scenario within the CHAT framework is viewed as creating contradictions in the activity system. Such internal tensions and contradictions within the system provide some impetus and motivation for change and development as the subject interprets and devises ways of addressing those contradictions (Davydov, 2004; Edwards, 2005; Engestrom & Miettinen, 2004).

This discussion has indicated that the PUPs experienced professional development related to teaching strategies, which manifested in higher learner achievement.

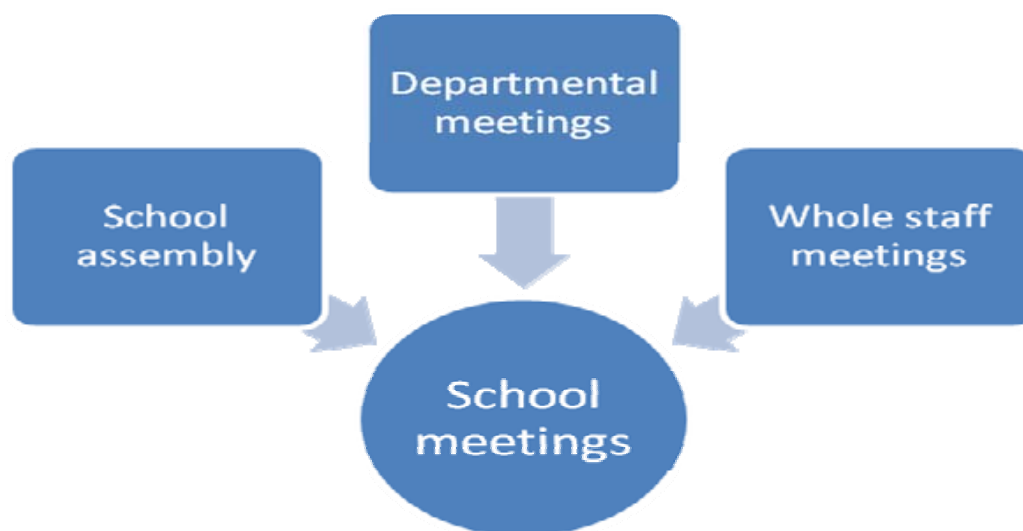
Non-formal Professional Development

Professional development takes place through planned and structured meetings and workshops at a range of sites. These gatherings also enable informal professional development as a by-product of the planned and structured meetings.

School Meetings

As discussed in Chapter 7, school meetings include whole school staff meetings, subject specialization meetings, academic board/management meetings and assembly. To begin with, whole school staff meetings provide the PUPs professional development experiences related to content, pedagogy and PCK as well as affective and policy issues. Mounting fruitful staff meetings foregrounds the view of the school as a learning organization where the head casts him/herself as the leading learner. Such ongoing opportunities locate teachers as life-long learners, learning both individually and collectively, but maintaining focus on their central object of the activity system, i.e. teaching practice.

Figure 8: Professional development through school structures



The instructional leader in this context assumes a strong leadership role creating the right learning ethos and climate. The institution becomes a learning school in a double sense. Drawing on Lumby (2003) a learning organization focuses on the learning of both students and staff, within conducive environments where opportunities are availed for teacher learning and sharing. This foregrounds individual learning through collective engagement in the activity system. Thus, staff meetings where different teachers emerging out of diverse biographies, experiences and disciplinary understandings pool their knowledges together and create a learning-enriched activity system where the PUPTs learn with and from each other.

Creating an appropriate environment and opportunities as well as setting up structures, resources and support to foster teacher collective learning is usually the responsibility of the principal. However, the findings reveal an absence of such supportive environments and structures for half the sample group. The PUPTs are denied those professional development experiences because of the absence of on-site meetings in their school contexts. Failure to enact roles and responsibility within the division of labour gives rise to contradictions. Literature discussed in Chapter 3 suggests that the instructional leader ought to be a model by becoming a live example of commitment to continuous collaborative learning, foregrounding the need for professional development as embedded in the organizational activity system structures.

Absence of such structures misses one of the pivotal features of learning organizations, as teachers are not exposed to structured collaborative learning through gatherings for their personal as well as institutional growth and development. Where PUPTs' professional development experiences lack organisational support, even the most promising experiences may not succeed. A clear, methodical and regular approach to professional development through collective structural activities enhances both individual and organisational development, all of which shape learner achievement. Guskey (2002) talks of systematic professional development that recognizes professional development as a process for everyone who affects students' learning. Hence, individual learning and organisational learning need simultaneous focus given that any development made in one component may

be annulled by challenges in the other. From this discussion, whole staff meetings encourage professional development.

Specialization meetings are distinct from whole staff meetings in the sense that they are limited to teachers in the subject specialization, but also provide a forum for the PUPTs to experience professional development. My findings indicate that professional development is effective through collegial sharing related to content pedagogy and PCK. Specialization departments are ‘talking departments’ marked by an active exchange of professional ideas and information and bound by clear and shared sense of vision largely emanating from and transmitted by the HoD (Darling-Hammond & Ball, 1997; McLaughlin, 2008). Through the division of labour, roles and responsibilities are allocated for enactment (HoD) and learning is a collective endeavour. The professional development experiences are generated from within a departmental community and enable the PUPTs to take advantage of planned and structured opportunities to learn specific skills from colleagues with particular subject expertise.

As suggested by the literature, (Darling-Hammond & Ball, 1997; Day, 1997; Little, 2000; McLaughlin, 2008) subject specialisation meetings provide for teacher engagement in modes of enquiry directly related to their discipline and broaden their vision as it relates to the discipline. Specialisation meetings offer opportunities to escape imprisonment in their own classrooms and enable collective reflection (Little 1993). Such meetings are vital for the PUPTs for local subject critical friendships and partnering to develop. The collegial relationships are rooted in an on-site shared object, i.e. teaching practice as explained by CHAT. Critical friendships according to some scholars consulted have been reported as effective in decreasing isolation and fostering teacher movement through reflexive stages to self-confrontation of their thinking and practice (Darling-Hammond & Ball, 1997; Little, 2000; McLaughlin, 2008; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001).

In relation to academic board/school management meetings, four Zimbabwean and one SA teachers held posts of responsibility according to the division of labour in the activity systems as HoDs and deputy principal respectively. This group further experienced

professional development in relation to pedagogical, management and administrative knowledge through the academic board/management meetings. Additional learning through this vehicle related to professionalism, departmental relations and communication. As specialisation managers, they had to establish the object for their departments, ensure appropriate utilisation of all tools and artifacts available, assuming authority, organizing, guiding and supervising use of those tools and artifacts within the rules and division of labour toward the established object in the node of the activity system. Thus, this process of bringing all actions of the different members of the node of the activity system together for a shared object and leading, as it were, a well-lubricated activity system was professionally developmental.

Staff and students meetings enabled these teachers some induction and socialisation into school norms, religious foundations, practices and values inclusive of the long-established norms relating to curriculum and pedagogy. Assembly fostered social cohesion and enables these PUPTs to develop and nurture their identity with the whole school group given the emotional connectedness that assembly attempts to foster and the tangible well-being it represents through bible sharings and prayer. My findings resonate with literature surveyed where assemblies are critical for school cohesion by reinforcing the value of those ceremonies and rituals (Day, 1995; Little, 2000; McLaughlin, 2008). The PUPTs gain more understanding of and confidence in the place of assembly within their activity system. It is the community in the activity system that determines standards and practices, modes of behaviour and what is acceptable or unacceptable. The CHAT framework emphasizes interaction, negotiation and re-negotiation of all the nodes of the activity system through activity. Assembly provides an opportunity in which all nodes of the system come together. Given that within CHAT learning is collective and through engagement within communities, assembly as a community engagement promoted professional development.

This section has indicated that non-formal professional development within the school site occurred through staff meetings, specialization meetings, academic board/school

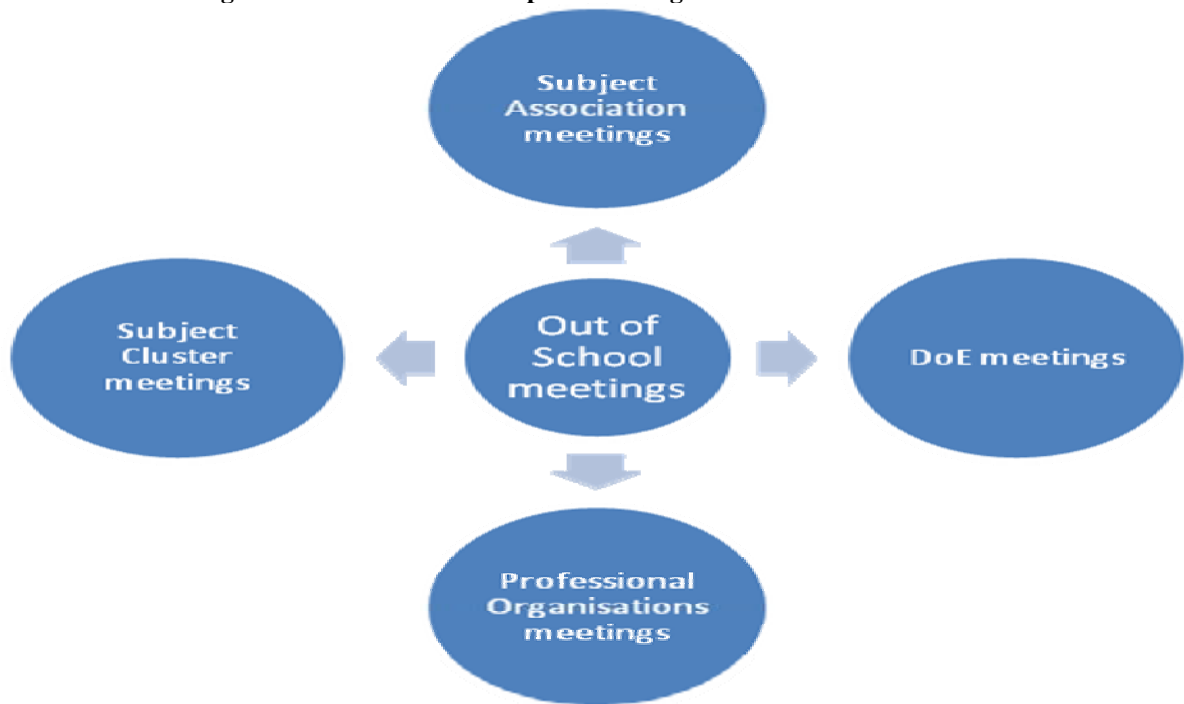
management meetings and assembly. Non-formal professional development in the broader professional sites is discussed next.

Non-formal Professional Development in Wider Professional Sites

The wider professional sites such as subject clusters subject associations, DoE and teacher unions, as illustrated in Figure 10, provide occasions of professional development for the PUPTs. Clusters represent groups of schools located in close geographical accessibility to each other, which support and promote individual and organisational professional development and teaching practices. McLaughlin (2008) indicates that such schools support each other through interpersonal agency and exchange of various forms of both psychological and material mediational tools and artefacts. Thus, through participation in cluster gatherings and activities the PUPTs experienced professional development.

First of all, the findings show that professional development activities in both SA and Zimbabwe have tended to shift from district wide generalized meetings to subject cluster specific workshops that offer some promise due to follow-ups in recurrent meetings. The PUPTs applaud specialization cluster meetings as relevant, given their involvement in determining both the agenda and procedure as individuals who are most directly affected by such efforts. Because of their control of the content and proceedings, contextual relevance of such efforts is very likely. Further, that involvement gives rise to an important voice in and ownership of the processes as they are typically theirs and this enhances their professional development experiences. Many scholars (Day, Fernandez, et al., 2000; Field, 1994; Liberman & McLaughlin, 1992; McLaughlin, 2008; Prawat, 1992) concur that effective professional development is likely to yield more transformational professional learning and development when it comes with greater ownership and control of processes by participants. Further, borrowing from Little (1993) subject specific teacher ‘collaboratives’ are located in an alternative professional development paradigm where their vision of professional development experiences encompasses disciplinary knowledge, pedagogy and learner learning, in addition to accessing a broader interpersonal professional agency.

Figure 9: Professional development through out of school structures



Given the collegial echelon in which they interacted, teachers were able to develop a community in which the PUPTs could publicly and confidently, non-formally and informally talk about their practice, learning how to facilitate learning from peers in a trusting environment. Such participation professionally develops teachers individually and collectively through deepening their content as well as PCK.

Second, subject associations offer professional development experiences for the PUPTs. However, Little (1993) highlights the nearly invisible position of subject matter associations in mainstream professional development literature despite their prominence in teachers' professional lives. To the PUPTs, subject associations offered increasingly powerful influence in articulating and implementing subject curricular and assessment standards and structures. The PUPTs received substantive subject depth and focus, and exchange both psychological and material mediational means as well as some sense of engaging in their specialisation.

Teachers' professional associations transcend school walls while fundamentally independent of employers, but they are so positioned to exert influence on teachers' dispositions to particular policies and reform agendas (Little, 2000; McLaughlin, 2008). To illustrate, one participant pointed out that "... student assessment in terms of quantity, weightings, the marking ... are set during annual subject association conferences ..." (Zimbabwe Teacher 6). Thus, they located the PUPTs in the business of broader collective learning through collaborations. This also provided occasions for informal professional development through sharing of successes and frustrations. As literature indicates that collaboration is essential for both personal and professional development (Bell & Gilbert, 1996a; Evans, 2002; Kennedy, 2005). Collaborations of mutual exploration and debate on issues of the shared object and performed through designed collective engagements to enhance joint reflection on, and planning their practices better is in tandem with the CHAT framework.

Third, in relation to the DoE, my findings reveal limited benefits from one-day meetings and workshops. Drawing on Fullan (1999) education departments have often viewed training synonymously with professional development where presenters share their expertise and provide a common 'jacket' for all. Such approaches are without participant choice, ownership or control of content and agenda. Their diverse needs, contexts, experiences and myriad expectations and possibilities for engagement in effective professional development experiences are often overlooked (Field, 1994; Little, 1993). In most cases, teachers have been invited to engage with policy documents, and in the absence of effective facilitation to ensure understanding and subsequent implementation, the PUPTs have not benefited from such workshops. Other PUPTs have experienced infrequent cascaded DoE workshops. Scholars such as Guskey (2002), Graven (2004) and Lieberman and Mace (2008) all argue that workshops have denied variability in teacher contexts, knowledge, and experiences. Instead, they provide an ineffective 'one size fits all' set of professional development sessions. This limited enactment of roles and responsibilities in terms of fruitful workshops by the community within the division of labour created contradictions.

Finally, contrary to the above situation from DoE, findings indicate that the PUPTs experienced professional development through participation in teacher unions. Teacher unions have acted as mouthpieces for teachers to express their views on diverse issues ranging from conditions of service, curriculum, organisation and administration of education as well as budgetary allocations. Literature examined in Chapter 3 suggests that teacher unions are being recognized as an important power that effectively contributes to individual teacher and general educational development (UNESCO, 2004; Little, 1993). They have generally been associated with educational policy determination and formulation by many nations. Through consultative workshops, the PUPTs gained opportunities to learn within both subject and inter-subject realms. Apart from thorny debates on salaries and conditions of employment, the workshops were vital for PUPTs' professional development experiences through all encompassing dialogues on education policy and curriculum, professionalism, human rights, individual and collective freedoms as well as HIV/AIDS. These gatherings are often 'crowd pullers' given the centrality of salaries and employment conditions in the lives of teachers, hence the likelihood of being labelled beneficial.

The discussion has illustrated that wider professional sites provide avenues for non-formal and incidental professional development. The next section focuses on informal professional development experiences through interactions.

Informal Professional Learning

Findings show that teachers experience professional development through informal or incidental interactions in diverse sites. In this study, all the professional development domains discussed earlier: formal learning through programmes, non-formal learning through the school meetings and wider professional sites are planned and structured to foster formal and non-formal professional development experiences for the PUPTs. However, these occasions also create opportunities for informal/incidental professional learning experiences. The informal domain typically overlaps with other types of interaction, which may in themselves be formal or non-formal, but they are always on the margins of informal opportunities. It is thus critical not to polarize formal, non-formal and

informal learning as essentially distinct from one another, but to view informal as a by-product of formal or non-formal contexts of course-type situations.

Researchers such as Southworth and Campbell (1992), Day (1995) and Fullan (1999) concur that opportunities to experience professional development for teachers exist whenever they assemble or work together. Thus informal learning within spaces surrounding occasions with more overt formal purposes are fundamental and valuable to professional development as they do not occur coincidentally but within a sustained, created and regularly re-created group climate. The notion of learning through collective activity emphasizes the role of informal communities in the activity system initiated by the need to address a shared object. In comparison with formal, non-formal or experiential organizational communities with structures, tasks and identities determined on functional roles, responsibilities and status hierarchies, informal communities transcend departmental, institutional, seniority and other such boundaries.

Wherever teachers find occasion to gather around professional circles, opportunities to learn from one another both formally and informally are amplified. As one teacher pointed out, “I am always learning from other teachers around this place just by looking around, mingling and listening to them even from a corner in the staffroom ...” (Zimbabwean Teacher 5). Such incidental opportunities, as Southworth and Campbell (1992) argue, enable teachers to share and exchange ideas, offering each other some suggestions while simultaneously picking up on useful ideas for their own classroom and professional development experiences. Informal interactions not only enhance the PUPTs’ professional development, but also personal and emotional development as they learn from both their experiences and practices and from the experiences and practices of colleagues.

Given that such sharing is not marked by any boundaries but within a ‘feel equal factor’ it offers professional development experiences on a wide array of topics touching their professional as well as personal and social lives. This type of sharing without fear of status differentials is what scholars like Edwards and D’Arcy (2004) and Billet (2008) describe as freely offering oneself as a resource for others while drawing on others as resources in the

activity system. This perspective of incidental or informal learning foregrounds the PUPTs' personal social networks and affiliations as offering occasions and effective nodes for professional development experiences to occur. It further shifts attention from planned, structured and organised opportunities to interpersonal and personal agency, and the relational dimensions and networking as providing some powerful mode of experiencing professional development. Thus, collective engagement that leads to learning in the activity system, hinges on interaction and on-going negotiation as viewed within CHAT (Davydov, 2004; Engestrom, 2001).

Another dimension of informal professional development for the PUPTs in this study emanated from informal relations and interactions with professional bodies and with parents. My findings show that inter-professional relations with organs and bodies outside the sphere of education provide opportunities for professional development for these PUPTs. Such organs hold out to teachers critical information about what the workplace will demand of their graduates (Little, 2000; UNESCO, 2006). The affiliations have benefited these PUPTs and their schools with regard to accessing important, topical and cutting edge knowledge, skills and other mediational tools as well as through demonstrations and presentations. This fosters teachers' professional learning and development inclusive of gaining insights into the labour market to benefit their learners. Where demonstrations and modelling have been staged, teacher professional development experiences have resulted from four cognitive learning processes: attention, retention, production and motivation.

With regard to teacher-parents relations, while parents were seen as attaching great value to education and being very supportive, their ability and capacity to assist children in their learning was limited in many activity systems in this study. Drawing on literature (Friedman & Krongold, 1993; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Zehava & Salman, 2008) some parents are reportedly embarrassed to debate schoolwork with their children, given their low education levels. The lower value attached to schooling, which was noted particularly in SA school contexts in this study, may be attributed to low education levels of parents. PUPTs sometimes put up with parental pressure where children's grades were

unsatisfactory. The teacher was pressured to raise the grades and not the child to improve performance, indicating parents' support of their children under any circumstances. The findings are confirmed by some scholars (Mulkeen, 2006; Tabach & Friedlander, 1997) who note that due to poor teacher-parents relations, teachers are often belittled and threatened with reports of incompetence to superiors. Reciprocal teacher-parent relations and support are emphasized as effective for enhancing teacher professional development experiences, classroom management and student discipline (Friedman, 2005; Friedman & Krongold, 1993; Taylor & Mulhall, 2001; Zehava & Salman, 2008).

This discussion has demonstrated how informal professional development for the PUPTs occurs both as by-products of the planned, structured gatherings in formal and non-formal domains as well as through informal interactions and reciprocal relations with professional bodies and parents. Chapter 7 illustrated that the school as site offered opportunities for professional development in two respects: non-formal professional development through meetings, and experiential professional development through the process of doing the teaching. The later is discussed in the next section.

Professional Development through Experiential Learning

Within the experiential domain, the experiences of PUPTs are through the process of doing the teaching. Central to learning in this domain is the manner experiences are processed and in particular with regard to reflection on experience. From the analysed data the PUPTs experienced professional development related to reflection in almost all four domains. Professional development opportunities are regarded as encompassing teacher critical reflection in practice, on practice and about their practice. Literature reviewed in this inquiry (Lieberman & Mace, 2008b; Little, 1993; McCann & Kim, 2002; McLaughlin, 2008; Monk, 1997; Morrison & McIntyre, 1998) suggests that teacher professional development is rooted in reflection. It is through reflection on the degree of achievement of learning outcomes that these PUPTs can effect improvement in their professional development. As they keep questioning themselves, stepping back and 'replaying' their lessons they develop new knowledge and beliefs on content, pedagogy and student learning and thereby experiencing professional development. This aspect is also emphasized within

the CHAT framework where interpretation and reflection provide avenues for learning and development (Daniels, 2004; Davydov, 1993).

Rodger (1996) suggests that experiential learning is cyclical, beginning with experience, through reflection to action, which is the concrete experience for reflection. Reflection for these PUPTs may, for example, be a result of pleasant or unpleasant experiences with a student in teaching/learning. This experience is followed by critical reflection, which involves trying to understand the encounter better, explaining it to oneself, going through the motions, comparing with previous instances, determining matches and mismatches, self-evaluating and evaluating against some norm and then developing a way forward based on experiences of others such as the mentor who may have had similar experiences. The action, talking to the mentor, leads to further self-evaluation and critical reflection, which will then be followed by designing new action to be experienced. The cycle is reflected in Figure 9 and exemplifies the PUPTs experiences and reflection.

Figure 10: The experiential learning cycle



The process of lesson delivery gives rise to professional development experiences related to supervision, lesson preparation, teaching strategies and class management, assessment evaluation and pastoral roles. Supervision and learner discipline are discussed under support and needs in later sections. This section thus focuses on lesson delivery. First, regarding the issue of lesson preparation, only half the sample practiced lesson planning. Preparation requires a strong integration of foundational and practical competences to enable thinking through the lesson in terms of content, materials, strategies and learner activities, and harmonizing content with pedagogical knowledge. Within these teachers were divergent views towards the value of planning. There was a tendency in the SA context to equate content knowledge and familiarity with preparation, postulating that possession of this disciplinary knowledge meant that no preparation was necessary as implied in this comment; “I find lesson plans unnecessarily laborious anyway and I get the feeling that I know my stuff, my sums very well. As for lesson plans I do not have much use for them” (SA Teacher 2).

Second, findings confirm professional development experiences related to the use of collaborative learner-centred strategies. Particular mention is made of group work, which is premised on the notion that while every learner may excel in certain aspects, he/she may be mediocre in other aspects (Day, Fernandez et al., 2000; Day & Sachs, 2004; Eraut, 2008; Little, 2000; McLaughlin, 2008). Their professional development experiences as they relate to the application of learner-centred strategies involved placing the learner at the centre of the learning process. The implication is that learning through experience resulted in the replacement of the teacher-centred methods as learner-centred pedagogies moved to the fore, and teachers adopted teaching for learning. The findings show that through the PCK gained in the formal domain and now connected to the experiential domain, teachers were able to match the appropriate strategies with the topics and concepts. Contrarily, infrastructural and other resource limitations in some school settings, particularly in the SA context, restricted the use of collaborative strategies. Such teachers resorted to using teacher/subject-centred expository strategies. Given that learner-centred interactive pedagogies were advocated by the two education systems, exclusive use of direct instruction created a mismatch between policy and practice giving rise to contradiction.

Third, the PUPTs experienced professional development related to learner assessment and evaluation. A teacher needs competence in the administration and recording of learner assessment. Drawing on the work of some scholars (Brown, Oke, & Brown, 1992; Bruner, 1995; McLaughlin, 2008) assessment and evaluation are critical for effective classroom practice and professional development. Professional development experiences in this aspect enabled the PUPTs to reflect on both their performance and that of their learners and to take appropriate remedial action. Such competence takes the teacher from assessment of learning, through assessment for learning to assessment as learning where procedures and practices dominate the professional development experiences (Torrance, 2007). Further, assessment for the PUPTs where there was evidence of professional development, included developing appropriate assessment items, crafting constructive developmental comments and providing developmental and reflective feedback. However, variations emerged within professional development experiences in many school contexts where assessment was limited to marking a nominal set of activities without offering substantial reflective feedback.

The PUPTs experienced professional development through performance of pastoral roles. Teachers bear some amount of responsibility for the academic, social, as well as emotional well-being of their students as they act 'in loco-parentis'. Such professional development opportunities emerged when the PUPTs assumed responsibilities within the activity system and this enhanced their knowledge and experiences in a manner that might otherwise not have occurred. Morrison and McIntyre (1998) posit that students emulate their progressive and conscientious teachers as role models and as such they approach them for advice and or guidance and counselling. Student counselling for the PUPTs was not viewed as a preserve for teachers specifically appointed or allocated that responsibility, but carried out without any sense of spatial sanctity where boundaries between teachers' roles and responsibilities are not observed (Harley, Bertram et al., 1999). On the contrary, the division of labour within CHAT allocates roles and responsibilities both vertically and horizontally within the activity system for enactment by the appointed individuals.

As pointed out, sites generated domains that are closely connected. Thus professional development creates opportunities for the PUPTs to blend the different types of knowledges: content, general pedagogic and PCK from the different domains. This section has indicated that learning through experience enables professional development through reflection and in particular related to preparation for lessons, use of learner-centred pedagogies, assessment and evaluation and performance pastoral roles. The following section addresses the question ‘what do we learn and what implications can we draw’?

Lessons and Implications

As I approach the end of my research journey, in this section I address the question: What does the thesis theorize regarding professional development experiences of PUPTs in this and similar contexts? Drawing on findings, six key points are drawn from the professional development experiences of PUPTs in Zimbabwe and SA generally, and the teachers studied in particular. First, to interpret and explain the phenomenon of professional development experiences I needed a theoretical way of understanding this kind of activity and CHAT provided the theoretical lens. The theoretical framework itself has been explored in terms of its usefulness as a methodological tool for describing, analysing and understanding professional development experiences, and in the process the framework has been expanded and developed to incorporate certain concepts. Thus, within the framework, my contribution and theorizing of my data results in a new conceptual framework around professional development experiences that enables thinking through other aspects of professional development. The suggested typology of domain-based distinctions of formality and experience used in conjunction with CHAT provides a more nuanced understanding of professional development experiences in rural secondary schools. CHAT on its own does not give a complete lens to make sense of the data, and I argue for an additive model to CHAT that includes domain-based distinctions of formality and experience that may expand the framework and deepen its applicability specifically in trying to understand professional development issues.

Second, professional development is not an individualized activity, so it is not a matter that resides purely at a psychological level in terms of motivation from within. What my data

has shown is that professional development experiences are highly mediated depending on different domains. In other words, while motivation to learn comes from the individual, much of the professional development experiences of the PUPTs take place through, with and from colleagues and other people. Hence, the most significant factor enhancing professional development experiences of the PUPTs is interaction within formal, non-formal, informal and experiential learning domains. This thesis could therefore conclude that professional development experiences of PUPTs occur in interaction in multiple domains. This, however, has significant implications for instructional leaders because it implies that attention needs to be paid to professional development experiences of teachers individually and collectively.

Again, the university provides support across the board essentially, but there are big variations in the nature and extent of collegial support within the school contexts. Management of the environment in which professional development occurs, either constrains or enables professional development activities. So, the management of time by instructional leaders to make time available for teachers to develop, and the provision of mentoring support, are key to making it possible for professional development to happen or not to happen. The literature surveyed shows that individual teacher professional development experiences are key to classroom practice, learner achievement, and organizational professional development (Calderhead, 1988; Fraser et al., 2007; Guskey, 2002; Puk & Haines, 1999; Roth & Tobin, 2004). My data indicates that appropriate supportive cultures make a difference to how people engage in professional development activities and that these are influenced directly at school level by school management and collegial relations and resourcing, as well as relations at cluster, district and national levels. If professional development of teachers is to be supported, particularly in rural contexts, in-school support should be built into structures and activities to continuously and purposefully bring teachers together and increase the likelihood of professional development experiences to occur. Teachers in these isolated spaces need occasions for dialoguing publicly about their work and challenges. Typically, heads would need to re-structure and re-arrange school schedules to provide time for interaction and collaboration, and even times for sharing teaching loads and observing each other as professionals.

The fourth overall finding is that teachers in rural contexts work in a ‘make-do’ frame of mind due to many pressures. These teachers generally face a range of common resource constraints, challenges of geography, and within the context of global pressures such as EFA, they also experience increased class sizes and pressures of performativity in terms of learner results and achievement. These PUPTs are therefore subjected to these sorts of systemic pressures. My findings also show that with the physical remoteness and isolation of some of these rural school settings, an active chain of support from the school management through parents’ community to school inspectors as noted by Talvitie, Peltokallio et al., 2000 is critical for effective pedagogic delivery and professional development of the PUPTs. For these teachers, borrowing from (Monk, 1997) in literature, effective professional development can only occur with relevant support. Such materials like information and supportive resources, continuous curriculum guidance and monitoring to keep them on course within the activity system are instrumental.

Within this ‘make-do’ frame of mind, an inherent theoretical potential is that given all these constraints, they ‘make do’ with the limited resources, very large classes and multi-grade teaching, and this ability to think creatively and deal with these constraints provides space for professional growth. Concomitant to this view (Billet, 2008) suggests that an awareness of contradictions gives rise to effective ways of mediating their effects and fosters development of creative ways to overcome them and the process brings about change and development. While the thesis findings also indicate needs related to pedagogical support, skills and knowledge to handle diverse classes with diverse learner ability levels are some of the capabilities that would assist these PUPTs in classroom delivery, management and learner discipline, and consequently enhance their professional development experiences.

Further, being in a rural school context locates individuals in remote isolated spaces which give rise to relational dimensions: inter-personal interdependence and agency within activity systems. Hence, activity systems in double-loop collective learning practices eliminate disciplinary margins and foster both teacher professional development and improved learner learning (Friedman, 2005). Hence, collaborative practices and an ethos

where there are good teacher-parent relations, and where personal, interpersonal, interdepartmental inclusive of intra-professional and inter-professional agency, build on openness and trust, are conceived as underpinning PUPTs' professional development experiences in these rural schools. Such relational dimensions reinforce and foster, rather than diminish, professional development experiences (Roth & Tobin, 2004). Literature surveyed (Anaxagorou, 2007) confirms the value of cooperation in the professional development of PUPTs and novice teachers in such rural settings. The expectations of emotional support from colleagues and school management emanating from feelings of isolation and loneliness are often exhibited (Chuckbuck, Clift et al., 2001; Zehava & Salman, 2008).

Thus, on-going interdependence in all aspects including resource utilization and open communication, and constructive criticism from the entire activity system enhances professional learning and development. Data further indicates that with such support, the PUPTs are confident to risk and engage in new activities in anticipation of shared successes or failures. Confidence only occurs if individuals admit to a need to learn, be supported in their learning, and being prepared to learn from one another (Southworth & Campbell, 1992). Hence, the more the PUPTs in rural schools view learning as the norm for their professional life and development and, the more secure they feel within the activity system, the more confident they are to utilize learning opportunities and to share that learning with colleagues. The absence of such cultures in some rural school settings limits professional learning and development.

Sixth, in terms of the differing contexts, two contrasting patterns emerge out of the SA and Zimbabwean settings. The two contexts at systemic level tend to provide different kinds of support for professional learning and it appears from the data that the difference lies in management and administration of the school processes. This would support a widely held argument that one of the key dimensions to education growth in SA is within management and administration of activities. Further, at the professional identity level, there seems to be a difference in the two contexts where in Zimbabwe teaching is not just a 'job' but retains the vocational dimension, and this appears to be much more restricted in the SA context.

So, levels of teacher commitment demonstrated in Zimbabwe, under severely constrained circumstances generally, and their 'stay-put' commitment to the profession that transcends the school context of merely viewing teaching as a 'job', enhances professional development. The concluding section below gives some pointers to implications for research.

Implications for Research

The six key issues discussed in the previous section raise a number of implications. However, I do not imply that all I discuss here has had full corroboration through evidence - some of the implications emerge from broad findings. The implications are drawn from five important contextual points: methodological, personal, school, national and university. The decision to address implications through the lens of these contexts is premised on the notion that each context gives rise to different influence on professional development experiences of the PUPTs.

Firstly, having developed a model going beyond CHAT, the model can only take hold after it has been used and further developed by other researchers. There is need for more studies, drawing on the framework and developing it to determine its applicability beyond this particular inquiry.

In addition and secondly, at an individual level, professional development can only happen with personal commitment. Whatever support and resource systems and structures may be put in place, unless the individual possesses some level of commitment to professional development, and has a sense of professional identity with it, professional development will not occur. However, assuming that commitment and identification with the process exist, then a range of other things are required to be in place to enable professional development to occur.

Thirdly, reported data for my study indicates a 'make-do' frame of mind, in the absence of observed data on how these teachers 'make-do', no conclusions can be drawn. Thus there is need for more classroom-based, detailed studies addressing questions such as how they

come to 'make-do', how they are resourceful, how they overcome the resource constraints and how they engage in personal agency. These aspects, which are outside my research, will need investigation.

Fourthly, at school level, professional development may be fostered by management building supportive structures and ensuring adequate time, classroom-based observations, mentoring and clinical partnerships. While some of these things are indicative from the data, given the size of the sample, some of these issues would need to be tested further. The implications from this study would suggest that making support and mentoring of new teachers or PUPTs part of how principals are trained as well as part of their own performance management at the systemic level would make a difference as the school leaders would have a heightened awareness of their responsibility to teacher professional development. At one level, this may imply a paradigm shift by school managers to understand their collaborative responsibility in training novice or PUPTs. They will then cease to expect PUPTs and novice teachers to be able to perform as fully qualified and experienced teachers when they arrive at the door. This is no longer the case, and with global trends would not be the case even into the future.

Fifth, there are questions for the universities regarding the sorts of leadership and management programmes, the extent to which the universities build into curriculum modules aspects of being a good mentor and organizing the timetable for all kinds of novice teachers. Furthermore, given the mixed mode model adopted for these programmes, mentoring and the whole mentoring relationship is pivotal to this teacher education model as the teachers are already in the practice of teaching. Such aspects need exploration and development.

As I bring to an end, my arduous research journey, whose course I entitled 'Exploring professional development experiences of the PUPTs in rural secondary schools', I conclude that these teachers experience professional development through interaction in multiple domains of formality and experience as captured by one participant's comments below:

I enjoyed myself very much, this was one of my greatest moments in my entire learning careers. I would read, attend lectures, come back and practice what I would have learnt with my students, they felt the change as we were going along. I would sometimes phone my PGDE classmates, discuss and share and laugh (laughs). We always met as a group to share experiences, ask each other why are you doing this, is that how it is done? It was very exciting to me, my peers and students, we were discovering new things as we were going, trying to implement this one if it fails, try the other one and if it works you say this is what is supposed to be done ideally or theoretically let me go and try this then you find what works and to what extent it works and why it works to that extent. It became more exciting, it was practically-based. You are always learning, you go to the staffroom you look at people, listen to their ziana (gossip) about teaching and other issues you pick up something, you learn. I did enjoy myself during these past semesters (Zim Teacher 5).

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Letter to Participant



Faculty of Education
Edgewood Campus
Private Bag X03
Ashwood 3065
KwaZulu-Natal
South Africa
Tel 031 260 3742
Cell 076 2995 974

Participant Informed Consent Form

Dear participant

My name is Tabitha Mukeredzi, a lecturer at the Masvingo Centre of the Zimbabwe Open University and currently pursuing doctoral studies in Education at University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. My programme requires that I conduct a research and my area of specialization is Teacher Development. I am requesting you to participate in my study entitled **“exploring professional development experiences of professionally unqualified practicing teachers in rural secondary schools.”** In this study, I am trying to get a deeper understanding of your practices in rural secondary schools in the process of becoming professionally qualified teachers. You have been identified to participate in this study because you are on the PGCE/PGDE programme.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw without any disadvantage to you, if it becomes impossible for you to continue to participate. Participation will take the form of individual interviews, taking photographs depicting your professional development activities, interviews based on the photographs and, a review of your teaching documents and journals. There will be three separate interviews and each one will not take more than an hour. The dates and times for interviews and document reviews will be negotiated with you.

With your permission, I will record the interviews to help me to remember what you say. When I come back for the 2nd and 3rd interview, I will bring summaries of all what will have transpired during the 1st and 2nd session so that you confirm the accuracy in capturing the essence of the interviews and document reviews. I will turn off the tape any time you ask me to and you may also choose not to answer questions at any time.

I will ask you to keep a journal for a month reflecting on your experiences and observations, if you have not been keeping one already. Journals and all the information obtained will be kept confidential from other people and locked up at a facility storage unit in the University of KwaZulu-Natal they will be destroyed five years after my graduation. I will make up pseudonyms and, no other identifying information about you will be written so that you remain anonymous. Findings of the study will be reported and disseminated in cumulative terms, unless otherwise with your written permission.

You may contact me with any questions or additional comments during participation and at any time after the study is complete on the above address or my Supervisor:

Prof Volker Wedekind
Faculty of Education
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X01
Ashwood 3209
KwaZulu-Natal
South Africa
Tel 033 260 5076
Cell 083 680 3696

I thank you in advance for your assistance

Yours sincerely

Tabitha Mukeredzi

To be completed by participant:

I.....hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research, and I consent to participating in the research.
I understand that participation is voluntary and I am at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time, should I so desire.

Signature of Participant

Date

Consent to use of photographs



Faculty of Education
Edgewood Campus
Private Bag X03
Ashwood 3065
KwaZulu-Natal
South Africa
Tel 031 260 3742
Cell 076 2995 974

Participant Informed Consent Form

Dear participant

My name is Tabitha Mukeredzi, a lecturer at the Masvingo Centre of the Zimbabwe Open University and currently pursuing doctoral studies in Education at University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. My programme requires that I conduct a research and my area of specialization is Teacher Development. I am requesting you to participate in my study entitled **“exploring professional development experiences of professionally unqualified practicing teachers in rural secondary schools.”** In this study, I am trying to get a deeper understanding of your practices in rural secondary schools in the process of becoming professionally qualified teachers. You have been identified to participate in this study because you are on the PGCE/PGDE programme.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw without any disadvantage to you, if it becomes impossible for you to continue to participate. Participation will take the form of individual interviews, taking photographs depicting your professional development activities, interviews based on the photographs and, a review of your teaching documents and journals. There will be three separate interviews and each one will not take more than an hour. The dates and times for interviews and document reviews will be negotiated with you.

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Findings of the study will be reported and disseminated in cumulative terms, unless otherwise with your written permission.

You may contact me with any questions or additional comments during participation and at any time after the study is complete on the above address or my Supervisor:

Prof Volker Wedekind
Faculty of Education
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X01
Ashwood 3209
KwaZulu-Natal
South Africa
Tel 033 260 5076
Cell 083 680 3696

I thank you in advance for your assistance

Yours sincerely

Tabitha Mukeredzi

To be completed by participant:

I.....hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research, and I consent to having my photographs placed in the thesis.
I understand that participation is voluntary and I am at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time, should I so desire.

Signature of Participant

Date

Appendix 2 Letter to Zimbabwe Ministry of Education National Office

Ref: C/426/3

All communications should be addressed to
"The Secretary for Education Sport and Culture"
Telephone: 734051/59 and 734071
Telegraphic address: "EDUCATION"
Fax: 794505



Ministry of Education Sport and Culture
P.O Box CY 121
Causeway
Zimbabwe

- TABITHA G. MUKEREDI
- UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
- BAG. X03
- ASHWOOD 3605
- DURBAN SA

Re: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH

Reference is made to your application to carry out research in the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture institutions on:

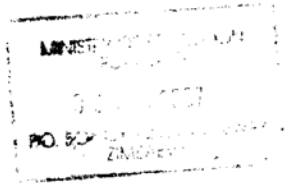
TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
DEPLOYMENT OF NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS
EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PRE & POST INDEPENDENCE

Permission is hereby granted. However you are required to liaise with the Provincial Education Director responsible for the schools from which you want to research.

You are also required to provide the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture with the final copy of your research since it is instrumental in the development of Education in Zimbabwe.


Z. M. Chitiga

For: SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE



Appendix 3 Letter to Provincial Education Director (PED) (Zimbabwe)



Faculty of Education
Edgewood Campus
Private Bag X03
Ashwood 3065
KwaZulu-Natal
South Africa
Tel 031 260 3742
Cell 076 2995 974

The Provincial Education Director
Masvingo Province
Masvingo

Dear Sir / Madam

REQUEST FOR AUTHORITY AND CONSENT TO RESEARCH ON TEACHERS IN YOUR RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

My name is Tabitha Mukeredzi, a lecturer at the Masvingo Centre of the Zimbabwe Open University and currently pursuing doctoral studies in Education at University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. My programme requires that I conduct a research and my area of specialization is Teacher Development. I am requesting your authority and consent to conduct research in your schools. My study is **“exploring professional development experiences of professionally unqualified practicing teachers in rural secondary schools.”** In this study, I am trying to get a deeper understanding of their practices in rural secondary schools in the process of becoming professionally qualified teachers. They have been identified to participate in this study because they are on the PGDE programme.

Their participation in this study is voluntary and they may withdraw without any disadvantage to them, if it becomes impossible for them to continue to participate. Participation will take the form of individual interviews, taking photographs depicting their professional development activities, interviews based on the photographs and, a review of their teaching documents and journals. There will be three separate interviews and each one will not take more than an hour. The dates and times for interviews and document reviews will be negotiated with them. All this will take place at their schools.

With their permission, I will record the interviews to help me to remember what they say. When I go back for the 2nd and 3rd interview, I will carry summaries of all what will have transpired during the 1st and 2nd session so that they confirm the accuracy in capturing the essence of the interviews and document reviews. I will turn off the tape any time they ask me to and they may also choose not to answer questions at any time.

I will ask them to keep a journal for a month reflecting on their experiences and observations, if they have not been keeping one already. Journals and all the information obtained will be kept confidential from other people and locked up at a facility storage unit in the University of KwaZulu-Natal where they will be destroyed five years after my graduation. I will make up pseudonyms and, no other identifying information about them will be written so that they remain anonymous. Findings will be reported and disseminated in cumulative terms, unless otherwise with their written permission.

You may contact me with any questions or additional comments during their participation and at any time after the study is complete on above address or you can contact my supervisor and Head of School of Education and Development:

Prof Volker Wedekind
Faculty of Education
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X03
Ashwood 3065
KwaZulu-Natal
South Africa
Tel 033 260 5076
Cell 083 680 3696

I thank you in advance for your assistance

Yours sincerely

Tabitha Mukeredzi

To be completed by the Provincial Education Director (PED) Masvingo:

I.....hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research, and I give authority and consent for teachers to participate in this research.

I understand that participation is voluntary and they are at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time, should they so desire.

Signature

Date

Appendix 4 Letter to DoE Pietermaritzburg



Faculty of Education
Edgewood Campus
Private Bag X03
Ashwood 3065
KwaZulu-Natal
South Africa
Tel 031 260 3742
Cell 076 2995 974

The Department of Education
Pietermaritzburg
KwaZulu-Natal

Dear Sir / Madam

REQUEST FOR AUTHORITY AND CONSENT TO RESEARCH ON TEACHERS IN YOUR RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

My name is Tabitha Mukeredzi, a lecturer at the Zimbabwe Open University and currently pursuing doctoral studies in Education at University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. My programme requires that I conduct a research and my area of specialization is Teacher Development. I am requesting your authority and consent to conduct research in your schools. My study is “**exploring professional development experiences of professionally unqualified practicing teachers in rural secondary schools.**” In this study, I am trying to get a deeper understanding of their practices in rural secondary schools in the process of becoming professionally qualified teachers. They have been identified to participate in this study because they are on the PGCE programme.

Their participation in this study is voluntary and they may withdraw without any disadvantage to them, if it becomes impossible for them to continue to participate. Participation will take the form of individual interviews, taking photographs depicting their professional development activities, interviews based on the photographs and, a review of their teaching documents and journals. There will be three separate interviews and each one will not take more than an hour. The dates and times for interviews, and document reviews will be negotiated with them.

With their permission, I will record the interviews to help me to remember what they say. When I go back for the 2nd and 3rd interview, I will carry summaries of all what will have transpired during the 1st and 2nd session so that they confirm the accuracy in capturing the essence of the interviews and document reviews. I will turn off the tape any time they ask me to and they may also choose not to answer questions at any time.

I will ask them to keep a journal for a month reflecting on their experiences and observations, if they have not been keeping one already. Journals and all the information obtained will be kept confidential from other people and locked up at a facility storage unit in the University of KwaZulu-Natal where they will be destroyed five years after my graduation. I will make up pseudonyms and, no other identifying information about them will be written so that they remain anonymous. Findings will be reported and disseminated in cumulative terms, unless otherwise with their written permission.

You may contact me with any questions or additional comments during their participation and at any time after the study is complete on above address or you can contact my supervisor and Head of School of Education and Development:

Prof Volker Wedekind
Faculty of Education
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X03
Ashwood 3065
KwaZulu-Natal
South Africa
Tel 033 260 5076
Cell 083 680 3696

I thank you in advance for your assistance

Yours sincerely

Tabitha Mukeredzi

To be completed by Department of Education (DoE) KwaZulu-Natal (KZN):

I.....hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research, and I give authority and consent for teachers to participate in this research.

I understand that participation is voluntary and they are at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time, should they so desire.

Signature of Participant

Date

Appendix 5 Letter to Principal/Head



Faculty of Education
Edgewood Campus
Private Bag X03
Ashwood 3065
KwaZulu-Natal
South Africa
Tel 031 260 3742
Cell 076 2995 974

The Principal/Head of School

Dear Sir / Madam

REQUEST FOR AUTHORITY AND CONSENT TO RESEARCH ON TEACHERS IN YOUR SCHOOL

My name is Tabitha Mukeredzi, a lecturer at the Masvingo Centre of the Zimbabwe Open University and currently pursuing doctoral studies in Education at University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. My programme requires that I conduct a research and my area of specialization is Teacher Development. I am requesting your authority and consent to conduct research in your schools. My study is **“exploring professional development experiences of professionally unqualified practicing teachers in rural secondary schools.”** In this study, I am trying to get a deeper understanding of their practices in rural secondary schools in the process of becoming professionally qualified teachers. They have been identified to participate in this study because they are on the PGCE/PGDE programme.

Their participation in this study is voluntary and they may withdraw without any disadvantage to them, if it becomes impossible for them to continue to participate. Participation will take the form of individual interviews, taking photographs depicting their professional development activities, interviews based on the photographs and, a review of their teaching documents and journals. There will be three separate interviews and each one will not take more than an hour. The dates and times for interviews, and document reviews will be negotiated with them. All this will take place at their schools.

With their permission, I will record the interviews to help me to remember what they say. When I go back for the 2nd and 3rd interview, I will carry summaries of all what will have transpired during the 1st and 2nd session so that they confirm the accuracy in capturing the essence of the interviews and document reviews. I will turn off the tape any time they ask me to and they may also choose not to answer questions at any time.

I will ask them to keep a journal for a month reflecting on their experiences and observations, if they have not been keeping one already. Journals and all the information obtained confidential from other people and locked up at a facility storage unit in the University of KwaZulu-Natal where they will be destroyed five years after my graduation. I will make up pseudonyms and, no other identifying information about them will be written so that they remain anonymous. Findings will be reported and disseminated in cumulative terms, unless otherwise with their written permission.

You may contact me with any questions or additional comments during their participation and at any time after the study is complete on above address or you can contact my supervisor and Head of School of Education and Development:

Prof Volker Wedekind
Faculty of Education
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X03
Ashwood 3065
KwaZulu-Natal
South Africa
Tel 033 260 5076
Cell 083 680 3696

I thank you in advance for your assistance

Yours sincerely

Tabitha Mukeredzi

To be completed by The School Head:

I.....hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research, and I give authority and consent for teachers to participate in this research.

I understand that participation is voluntary and they are at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time, should they so desire.

Signature of School Head

Date & School Stamp

Appendix 6 Ethical Clearance



RESEARCH OFFICE (GOVAN MBEKI CENTRE)
WESTVILLE CAMPUS
TELEPHONE NO.: 031 – 2603587
EMAIL : ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

27 JULY 2009

MRS. TG MUKEREDZI (206526268)
EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

Dear Mrs. Mukeredzi

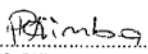
ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/0051/09D

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been granted for the following project:

“Exploring professional development experiences of professional unqualified practicing teachers in Rural Secondary Schools”

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

Yours faithfully


.....
MS. PHUMELELE XIMBA
ADMINISTRATOR
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES ETHICS COMMITTEE

cc. Supervisor (Prof. V Wedekind)
cc. Mr. D Buchler
cc. Ms. R Govender

Appendix 7 Interview and document analysis schedules

Interview schedules

Interview One

Part 1: A review of the participant's education history up to the time they became a student teacher.

1. Tell me about your school where you are teaching.
2. Tell me how you came to be a teacher.
3. Why did you decide to study further?

Part 2: Contemporary Experience

1. Tell me about a typical working day in your life as a teacher in a rural secondary school from the time you get up, taking me through the day and focussing on classroom activities and why they are important.
2. Tell me what you would need to help you to grow as a teacher? In what ways would that help you?
3. Tell me about colleagues, university staff or community members who may help you with your teaching activities. In what way do they help you?
4. Who or what influences your classroom activities? Tell me more about that.
5. Is there anything that you would like to add, is there anything that you would like to ask me?

Interview Two – Photo Elicitation

Interview Two will be based on the Photographs that the participants will have made. In other words this will be a photo elicitation interview where participants will lead the interview.

Other issues will also be guided by what will emerge from interview 1.

Interview Three - Meaning making

1. Tell me about your teaching before you started studying further. Tell me if it is different from your teaching now and how it is different.
2. Tell me how you feel about yourself regarding this journey to being professionally qualified? Probe to determine identity construction
3. Tell me how do you understand professional development in your life as a teacher in a rural secondary school.
4. Where do you see yourself five years from now? Would you explain why?
5. Is there anything that you would like to add, is there anything that you would like to ask me?

Document Analysis

The documents relevant for analysis in this enquiry comprised the teachers' teaching documentation.

The focus of the analysis will be on what message the documents portray with regard to the nature of professional development experiences there in. Such teaching documentation will include:

1. The planning book / file
2. Scheme of Work
3. Record of marks
4. Students' workbooks
5. Any teaching/learning aids available

Appendix 8 Participants' Biographical Data

SA Participants

Teacher	Gender	Marital Status	Subjects Taught	Experience Before PGDE
1	Male	Married	Mathematics Physics	13
2	Male	Single	Mathematics	3
3	Female	Single	Mathematics	1
4	Female	Single	Life Orientation English	6
5	Female	Single	Consumer Sciences	2
6	Female	Single	Mathematics	4

Zimbabwean participants

Teacher	Gender	Marital Status	Subjects Taught	Experience Before PGDE
1	Male	Married	History Geography	9 years
2	Female	Married	English Religious Education	7
3	Female	Married	English	9
4	Male	Married	English Shona	7
5	Male	Married	Comerce Busines studies	17
6	Male	Married	Geography	6
7	Male	Single	History	4

Appendix 9 Summary of Details of School Sites

SA School sites

School	Km from town	Road	Facilities	Level & Enrolment	Class size	Staff	Resources	Responsible authority	When Established before or after Liberation
1	125	Tarred & Gravel	Telephone Piped water Not Electrified	600+- Grade 10 -12	50 - 60	17	Under - resourced	Mission	After
2	51	Tarred	Telephone Piped water Electrified	1 700+- Grade 8 - 12	70 - 75	30	Satisfactory	Public	Before
3	100	½ tarred, ½ gravel	Telephone Piped water Electrified	1500+- Grade 8 - 12	50 - 80	23	Satisfactory	Public	Before
4	83	Tarred & Gravel	Telephone Piped water Electrified	1300+- Grade 8 - 12	55 - 80	27	Poor	Public	Before
5	65	Tarred / Gravel	Telephone Piped water Electrified	1600+- Grade 8-12	60 -70	29	Under- resourced	Public	Before
6	39	Tarred / Gravel	Telephone Piped water Electrified	1750 +- Grade 10 – 12	50 - 80	31	Under – resourced	Public	Before

Zimbabwean School Sites

School	Km from town	Road	Facilities	Level & Enrolment	Class size	Staff	Resources	Responsible authority	When Established before or after Liberation
1	87	Tarred except 9 km	No Telephone No cell network Piped water Electrified	A Level 1100 +-	40 - 45	28	Good	Catholic Diocese (Boarding for girls)	Before
2.	50	Tarred	No telephone No cell network Piped water Not Electrified	O level 700+-	40+-	23	Poor	Rural District Council (Rural Day school)	After
3.	52	Bad gravel	No Telephone No cell network Piped Water Electrified	A' Level 1500+-	58+-	33	Poor	Government (Rural day school)	After
4.	63	Tarred except 11 km	No Telephone No cell network No Piped water Not Electrified	A Level 700 +-	40 - 45	21	Poor	Council day school	After
5.	56	Tarred except 1km	No telephone No cell network Piped water Electrified	A Level 1450 +-	45 - 50	36	Good	Zion mission (Boarding school for boys & girls)	After
6.	53	Very bad gravel only foot access last 1 km to the school	No telephone No cell network No Piped water Not Electrified	O Level 750+-	40 -45	21	Poor	Council Day school	After

Appendix 10 Photographs used as prompts for Interview 2







